Gennadius Scholarius Complete Works

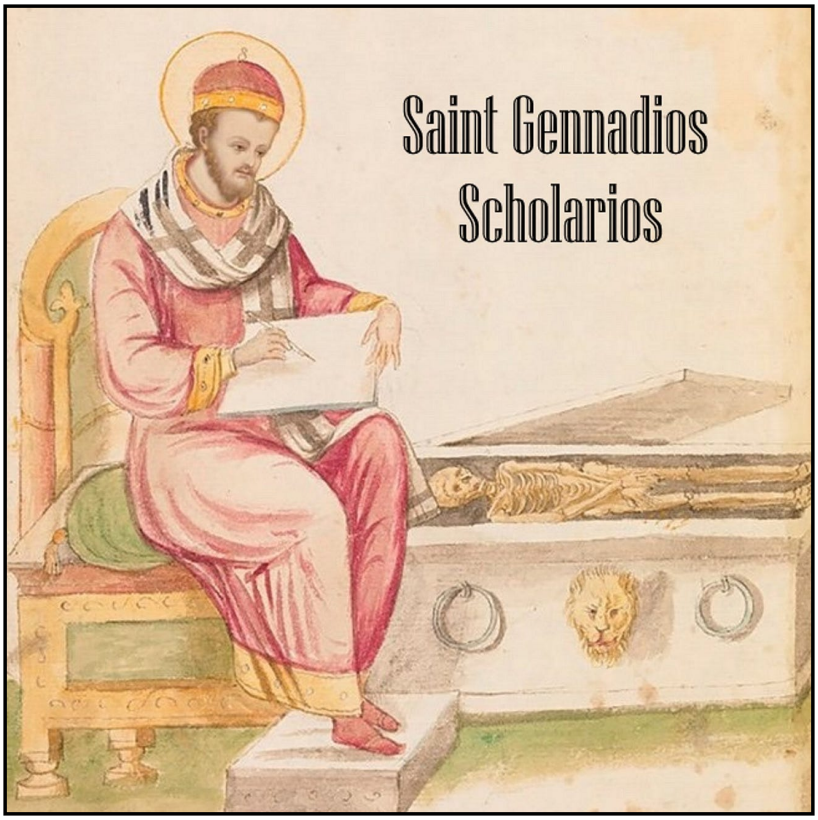
VOLUME 4

The Complete Works of
The Holy Patriarch of Constantinople
Saint Gennadius Scholarius

(OCGS 4)

Volume 4

THE MOST HOLY
PATRIARCH OF



CONSTANTINOPLE

(1405-1473)

INDEX

Polemic Against Gemistos Plethon. 1

I. Against Plethon's Difficulties Concerning Aristotle. 1

1. Prologue. 1

2. Book One. 7

3. Book Two. 46

II. Letter Accompanying the Previous Work to Marc of Ephesus. 77

III. Letter to Gemistos Plethon Concerning His Work Against the Latins (1450). 79

IV. Letter to the Princess of the Peloponnese on Gemistos Plethon's Treatise on the Laws (1454–1456). 101

V. Letter to Exarch Joseph on the Book of Gemistos Plethon and Against Pagan Polytheism (after 1456). 104

VI. On the One and Triune God and Against Atheists and Polytheists (after 1456). 116

Pastoral and Ascetical Works. 127

I. What a Bishop Must Know and Teach. 127

II. Letter to the Monk Maximus Sophianos and All the Monks of the Monastery of Sinai (1454–1456). 132

III. Letter to the Monk Joachim of Sinai. 137

IV. Responses of Patriarch Gennadius Scholarius to the Questions of George, Despot of Serbia (1454–1456). 138

V. Pastoral Letter on the Fall of Constantinople. Gennadius Speaks of Renouncing the Patriarchal Dignity (1455). 141

VI. Pastoral Letter: Gennadius Announces His Forthcoming Resignation from the Patriarchal Office (1455-1456). 155

VII. Letter to Sophrosynē, Sister of the Empress. Gennadius Sends Her His Work: On the First Service of God. 157

VIII. On the First Service of God (1458). 159

IX. To Theodore Branas. Personal Apology (1464). 177

X. On the Difference Between Venial and Mortal Sins. 184

XI. Exhortation to a Sinner. Fragment. 190

XII. Letter of Consolation. Fragment. 197

XIII. Various Thoughts. 201

XIV. Fundamental Questions. 206

Liturgical Works. 209

I. Prayers for Metanies and Partial Summaries of the Psalms. 209
II. Prayer to the Father. 230
III. Paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer. 231
IV. Prayer for the Deliverance of the Peloponnese (1452). 234
V. Prayer to the One and Triune God. 236
VI. Public Prayer of Patriarch Gennadius After His Liturgy (1454-1456). 238
VII. Morning Prayer Addressed to Jesus Christ. 241
VIII. Another Version of the Previous Prayer. 243
IX. Another Prayer to Jesus Christ. 245
X. Prayer to Jesus Christ at the Fall of Night. 247
XI. Prayer to the Holy Virgin. 249
XII. Prayer to All the Saints, Angels and Men. 251
Poetic Works. 252
I. Translation of a Hymn by Synesius. 252
II. Selection of Prayers in Verse. 253
III. Epitaph for Demetrius Lascaris Leontaris, Who Became a Monk Under the Name Daniel (1431). 256
IV. On the Brevity of Life and the Flight from the World (before 1447). 257
V. Epitaph for Macarius, Abbot of Pantocrator. 258
VI. Epitaph for Theodore Scholaris Sophianos (1456). 259
VII. Iambic Acrostic. 260
VIII. On the Passion of Jesus Christ. 261
IX. Exhortation to the Young. 262
X. Epitaph for Mark of Ephesus (1444?). 263
XI. Prayer for the Salvation of the Peloponnese (1452). 264
XII. Melodic Hymn to God. 267
XIII. Canon in Honor of Gregory Palamas. 270
Correspondence A. Letters Signed: "Georges Scholarios" (Before the End of the Year 1450). 273
I. To John, His Disciple. 273
II. To His Disciple. 277
III. To John, His Disciple, on the Syllogism. 282

IV. The Same to the Same (1435/1436). 284
V. To the Same (End of 1435). 285
VI. To the Despot Theodore (1436?). 287
VII. To the Same (Before Departing for Italy). 288
VIII. To the Priest Bessarion (Early 1436?). 289
IX. To Demetrios Makrenos. 291
X. To the Hieromonk Makarios. 293
XI. To the Emperor John. 295
XII. To the Deacon John Eugenikos, Brother of Mark. 296
XIII. To the Despot Constantine. 298
XIV. To the Priest Bessarion. 300
XV. To Pope Eugene IV (Before the Council of Florence). 302
XVI. To Philelphus, in Milan (1437). 303
XVII. To Alexis Lascaris (1438). 304
XVIII. To an Unknown Person. 305
XIX. To the Emperor's Brother (Around 1437). 306
XX. To the Grand Chartophylax Balsamon. 307
XXI. To Ambrose Traversari (1438). 308
XXII. To Marco Lippomano, in Venice (1439). 309
XXIII. To an Unknown Person. 311
XXIV. To Mark of Ephesus (1440). 312
XXV. To the Prince in the Peloponnese (1441). 315
XXVI. To Paisios in Crete. 316
XXVII. To Asanes in Lemnos (1449–1450). 317
XXVIII. To the King of Trebizond (1449–1450). 318
XXIX. To the Nomophylax in the Peloponnese (Around 1450). 319
XXX. To Demetrius Raoul Kabakes (1450–1451). 321
XXXI. To the Grand Duke (1449?). 322
XXXII. Response to Luke Notaras, Son-in-Law of the Emperor (1449?). 323
XXXIII. Response to Luke Notaras (1449?). 325
XXXIV. To Emperor Constantine (1450). 326

Correspondence B. Letters Signed: Gennadius Scholarius (from the end of 1450). 333
I. To Emperor Constantine. 333
II. To Manuel Raoul Oises (1451-1452). 335
III. To an Unknown Person (before 1453). 344
IV. To the Grand Duke Loukas Notaras (1451-1452). 346
V. To the Same (1451-1452). 348
VI. To an Unknown Person (1452). 352
VII. To Lady Simonis Palaiologina. 353
Historical Works: Chronography (1472).* 354

Introduction

The content of this fourth volume is particularly varied. We have gathered here: The pieces related to the polemic against Gemistos Plethon (pp. 1–189); The pastoral and ascetic works (pp. 190–309); The liturgical and poetic works (pp. 310–397); The correspondence (pp. 398–503); Finally, a short Chronography representing proper historical accounts (pp. 504–512). The entirety comprises no fewer than 87 pieces, most of which are very short. Of these, 29 were previously unpublished. They represent one-third of the volume in terms of length. Another third, published at various times and scattered across collections or editions that are now rare or difficult to find, was previously hard to access. The remainder was collected in 1912 by Sp. Lambros in the second volume of his Παλαιολόγεια καὶ Πελοποννησιακά.[1] The present edition, often based on new sources, particularly autographs, significantly improves and corrects previous editions on numerous points, as the reader will be able to observe from the critical apparatus.

The number of pieces drawn from autographs is 51, accounting for more than half of the entries and covering 360 out of 512 pages.

Dogmatic, moral, and ascetic theology, liturgy, philosophy, literature, and especially history have much to draw from this collection. Several previously unpublished pieces provide new insights into the life and personal character of Scholarios.

I. The Polemic Against Gemistos Plethon.

Under the heading Polémique contre Gémistos Pléthon (Polemic Against Gemistos Plethon), we present six pieces of very unequal length, occupying more than a third of the volume (pp. 1–189). Their content is of a philosophico-theological nature.

1.The principal work comprises the two books: Contre les difficultés de Pléthon au sujet d'Aristote (Against Plethon's Objections Concerning Aristotle, pp. 1–116). Of this work, only the first book had been published by Ed. Minoïde Mynas in 1858, with critical notes, based on manuscripts 743 and 744 from the Supplement of the Greek collection of the Bibliothèque nationale de Paris, both dating from the 19th century. This edition provides a rather mediocre text, as can be seen from the variants we provide for the first twenty pages. Our edition is based, for both books, on Paris. suppl. 618, a manuscript partly autograph and partly written by a contemporary of the author, and Dionysianus Athonensis 330, a copy reviewed and corrected by Scholarios himself. The latter manuscript has already been described in the introduction to Volume II of the Complete Works. As for Paris. suppl. 618, brought by Minoïde Mynas from the Vatopedi Monastery, here is a brief analysis:

On paper, from the 15th century, measuring 21.5 × 14.5 cm, 196 folios. Folios 4–8, 97, 98, and 192–194 are blank, and folios 1–108 are written in the hand of Scholarios:

[1] It should be noted that some of the pieces published by Lambros in 1912 have been revised based on new manuscripts or even entirely re-edited in the Athens edition of 1994, prepared under the care of I. K. Boghiatzidēs.

Introduction

1. (f. 1): Epitaph of Theodore Sophianos. Inc. πάνυ λαμπρὰ καὶ σοφὴ τέκνον φύσις. At the top of the page, this memorial, half-erased by time: † Μετέστη πρὸς Κύριον ὁ δοῦλος αὐτοῦ ὁ χρησιμώτατος κυρ Θεόδωρος ὁ [Σχολάριος ὁ πατριάρχης Γεννάδιος, these words added unfortunately over others that have become illegible, the first of which was certainly Σοφιανός], ἐν ἔτει,ω πω ξε', σεπτεμβρίω κη': † [ἐν τῇ added afterward]. Below, still in the hand of Scholarios: Οὕτως ἐπεγράφησαν τῷ τάφῳ τοῦ μακαρίτου ἐν τῇ ἁγία μονὴ τοῦ Βατοπεδίου.

2. (f. 1–3): Notes on ecclesiastical computation, preceded by this indication: ἐν Ἀδριανουπόλει: † Inc. Ἡ ἴνδικτος εὑρίσκεται.

3. (f. 4): Five lines of various texts or sayings, which are also found, at least in part, in other autograph manuscripts. Here they are: Μὴ φοβεῖσθε ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποκτεινόντων τὸ σῶμα, τὴν δὲ ψυχὴν μὴ δυναμένων ἀποκτεῖναι. Κύριε μὴ στήσης αὐτοῖς τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ταύτην· καὶ τοῦτο εἰπών, ἐκοιμήθη. Κύριε Ἰησοῦ, δέξαι τὸ πνεῦμά μου. Οὐδὲν οὕτω τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἰσχυρόν, ὃ τῷ φθόνῳ μέχρι παντὸς ἀντέχει. Νῦν ἐμοὶ καλὸν τὸ θανεῖν, ὅτι μου προτέθνηκεν ἡ ἀλήθεια.

4. (f. 9–19): An incomplete translation, missing the beginning, of St. Thomas's opuscule De ente et essentia. The text begins here with the words: σημαίνειν τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ πράγματος. Cf. t. VI.

5. (f. 19): Γεωργίου ταῦτα τοῦ Σχολαρίου. Inc. Οὗτος ὁ Θωμᾶς, λατῖνος μὲν τῷ γένει καὶ τῇ δόξῃ. Cf. t. VI, p. 177–178.

This section contains the work of George Scholarios. It begins: Οὗτος ὁ Θωμᾶς, λατῖνος μὲν τῷ γένει καὶ τῇ δόξῃ (This Thomas, a Latin by birth and reputation). For further reference, see Volume VI, pages 177–178.

6.(f. 20–96v): Ἐξήγησις εἰς τὸ τοῦ διδασκάλου Θωμᾶ ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἀκίνου βιβλίον, τὸ περὶ τοῦ εἶναι καὶ τῆς οὐσίας. Inc. Γεώργιος ὁ Σχολάριος, Ματθαίῳ τῷ Καμαριώτῃ, χαίρειν. Προοίμιον. Ἀεί σου τὴν εἰς τὰ καλὰ προθυμίαν καὶ τὸ φιλομαθὲς ἐπαινῶν. Cf. t. VI.

This section contains George Scholarios's Explanation of the Book of the Teacher Thomas Aquinas, On Being and Essence. It begins: Γεώργιος ὁ Σχολάριος, Ματθαίῳ τῷ Καμαριώτῃ, χαίρειν. Προοίμιον. Ἀεί σου τὴν εἰς τὰ καλὰ προθυμίαν καὶ τὸ φιλομαθὲς ἐπαινῶν (George Scholarios to Matthew Kamariotes, greetings. Prologue. I always praise your zeal for good things and your love of learning). For further reference, see Volume VI.

7.(f. 99–152): Γεωργίου τοῦ Σχολαρίου, κατὰ τῶν Πλήθωνος ἀποριῶν ἐπ' Ἀριστοτέλει, βιβλίον πρῶτον. Inc. Σκοποῦντί μοι, κράτιστε καὶ γαλη νότατε ἡγεμόνων Κωνσταντίνε.

This section contains the first book of George Scholarios's Against Plethon's Objections Concerning Aristotle. It begins: Σκοποῦντί μοι, κράτιστε καὶ γαλη νότατε ἡγεμόνων Κωνσταντίνε (As I consider, most noble and serene leader Constantine).

8.(f. 152–191v): Κατὰ τῶν Πλήθωνος ἀποριῶν ἐπ' Ἀριστοτέλει, βιβλίον δεύτερον. Inc. Μέχρι μὲν δὴ τούτων, ἐμοί τε ἥδιστα εἶχε Πλήθωνα ἐξελέγχειν.

This section contains the second book of Against Plethon's Objections Concerning

Aristotle. It begins: Μέχρι μὲν δὴ τούτων, ἐμοί τε ἥδιστα εἶχε Πλήθωνα ἐξελέγχειν (Up to this point, it was most pleasing to me to refute Plethon).

9.(f. 192v): Ἀρριανοῦ, ἐκ τῶν εἰς Ἀλέξανδρον ἀναγεγραμμένων. Two passages, the first of seven lines and the second of nine, followed by an autograph note from Scholarios on Sophianos. Inc. Αἰωνία σου ἡ μνήμη υἱε μου Σοφιανέ.

This section contains excerpts from Arrian's Writings on Alexander. The first passage is seven lines long, and the second is nine lines long. These are followed by an autograph note from Scholarios on Sophianos, beginning: Αἰωνία σου ἡ μνήμη υἱε μου Σοφιανέ (May your memory be eternal, my son Sophianos).

10.(f. 195): A short autograph prayer by Scholarios. Inc. † Βοηθός μοι, δέσποτα τῶν ὅλων, Χριστέ.

This section contains a brief autograph prayer by Scholarios, beginning: † Βοηθός μοι, δέσποτα τῶν ὅλων, Χριστέ († Help me, O Lord of all, Christ).

The work of Scholarios aims to refute the opuscule of George Plethon titled: Περὶ ὧν Ἀριστοτέλης πρὸς Πλάτωνα διαφέρεται (On the Differences Between Aristotle and Plato).[2] The first book, by far the most important in its subject matter, responds to the first four chapters of Plethon's work; the second book addresses the other grievances formulated against the Stagirite (Aristotle) by the friend of Plato. According to Scholarios's own testimony[3], he undertook this defense of Aristotle not so much out of love for the philosopher but for the defense of the Christian religion. This was not, on his part, a mere philosophical or literary contest, nor a desire to exalt Aristotle above Plato. Against Plato himself, Scholarios harbored no animosity and acknowledged his merits. He only deals with Plato in passing. If he took up the pen, it was because he noticed in Plethon's writing a deliberate effort to disparage the philosopher whose doctrine, though not free from serious errors, best aligns with Christian dogmas. The general tone of this defense is rather haughty and entirely lacking in amiability. Plethon is treated as reckless, ignorant, and a slanderer. Scholarios makes it clear that if Plethon dares to reply and attack Aristotle again, he will find someone ready to respond. The conclusion, in particular, is laden with threats. Rumors were already circulating that the detractor of the Stagirite had composed a work insulting to Christianity and aimed at nothing less than reviving the old Greco-Roman paganism, substituting the gods of Olympus for Christ. This was, at least, the intention attributed to him by several of those who had read a few chapters of the mysterious work, long announced but never published. Plethon is summoned to clear his name or to reveal his true intentions. His silence can only compromise him further.

The most significant part of this defense in favor of Aristotle addresses the first grievance raised by Plethon: namely, that the Stagirite (Aristotle) posits the world as eternal and does not assign it an efficient cause. According to Plethon, Aristotle did not ascend to the notion of a Creator God. In Plethon's view,

---

[2] Published by Ed. Georges Chariander, Basel, 1574, this opuscule is reproduced in Migne's Patrologia Graeca, vol. CLX, col. 889–982.

[3] See the end of the second book, p. 114, line 17 and following. Letter to the Exarch Joseph, p. 156, line 11 and following: «Οὐ Πλάτωνι φιλονεικοῦντες, οὐκ Ἀριστοτέλους τι πεφροντικότες ἰδίᾳ, τῷ δὲ σκόπῳ τοῦ Γεμιστοῦ χαλεπαίνοντες, ζήλῳ τῆς πίστεως περιττὸν ἄλλως ἡμῖν εἰλόμεθα πόνον.» (We are not contending for Plato, nor are we particularly concerned with Aristotle, but we are angered by Gemistos's purpose, and out of zeal for the faith, we have undertaken this otherwise unnecessary labor.)

Introduction

Aristotle's God is merely a final and motive cause of the universe. Scholarius firmly opposes this interpretation of the great philosopher's thought. Through direct and indirect arguments, as well as by examining the technical meanings of certain words—such as δημιουργεῖν (to create), κινεῖν (to move), and ποιεῖν (to make)—Scholarius strives to demonstrate that Aristotle indeed regarded God as the true efficient cause of the world, even though the world is coeternal with God, that is, eternal. Who is correct, Plethon or Scholarius? Modern historians of philosophy tend to side with Plethon. However, we believe that a careful reading of Aristotle's defender could lead to a reevaluation of this case.

The date of composition of this work is relatively easy to determine. From the dedicatory letter addressed to Constantine Palaiologos, the future Constantine XII and last emperor of Byzantium, we learn that he had already departed for the Peloponnese and taken possession of the Despotate of Mistra, an event that occurred in 1443. Furthermore, before publishing his work, Scholarius sent it to Mark of Ephesus for his judgment. We know that Mark died on June 23, 1444. Therefore, the publication of this apology must be placed in the second half of 1443 or the first half of 1444. As for Plethon's opuscule, likely written at the request of Cosimo de' Medici after the Council of Florence, one would not be far off in assigning it a publication date of 1441/1442.[4]

It is known that Plethon responded to Scholarius's defense with a rebuttal, in which he maintained his positions and returned his adversary's sharp remarks in kind. He particularly reproached Scholarius for his self-importance.[5]

As mentioned earlier, before releasing his Pro Aristotele to the public, George Scholarius sent it to Mark of Ephesus for his opinion. This letter, already published by Migne [6] and again by Lambros [7], is brief but highly interesting. It shows George fully reconciled with the Bishop of Ephesus after the bitter-sweet response he had written in 1440, which can be found in his Correspondence [8]. We also learn from this letter that George had Mark himself as his first teacher and educator [9], which does not contradict the statement made in the 1440 letter, where Scholarius boasts of not having received lessons from any of his compatriots in rhetoric, philosophy, or theology [10].

The third document in this first series is a lengthy letter addressed to Plethon, which has survived only in the singular manuscript Parisinus 1297 from the 16th century. Previously published by V. Cl.-D. Alexandre

---

[4] At the time of writing, Scholarius states that Plethon's work reached him long after its appearance, ἐς ἡμᾶς ὀψὲ περιῆλθε, p. 1, 8-9.

[5] This rebuttal is titled: Πρὸς τὰς ὑπὲρ Ἀριστοτέλους Γεωργίου τοῦ Σχολαρίου ἀντιλήψεις (Against the Defenses of Aristotle by George Scholarius). Published by W. Gass in Gennadius und Pletho, Breslau, 1844, it is reproduced in Migne's Patrologia Graeca.

[6] P. G. de Migne, t. cit., col. 941-1020. Scholarius was aware of this rebuttal. In his Letter to the Exarch Joseph (see below, p. 156, 14), he declares that the misfortunes of his homeland prevented him from responding. P. G., 1, CLX, col. 743-746.

[7] Παλαιολόγεια καὶ Πελοποννησιακά, vol. II, p. 241-243.

[8] P. 445-449.

[9] "Ὡς γὰρ ἐκεῖνοι [οἱ ἐμοὶ γονεῖς] τῆς φύσεως, οὕτως αὐτὸς μοι λόγων τε καὶ ἠθῶν τὰ σπέρματα κατεβάλου." P. 17, 33-34.

[10] Correspondence: Letters of George, no. XXIV, p. 446, 9-11: "Ἀγνοεῖν δὲ οἶμαι μηδένα, ὅτι καὶ ῥητορικῆς καὶ φιλοσοφίας καὶ τῆς ὑψηλῆς καὶ τὴν τῶν πολλῶν ἕξιν ὑπερβαινούσης θεολογίας οὐδενὶ τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν ἐχρησάμεθα διδασκάλῳ."

based on this manuscript [11], it was reproduced in Migne's Patrologia [12]. Our edition relies on the same source, which is not without flaws. We have adopted most of the corrections proposed by Alexandre. The letter must be dated to 1450. It was written at the beginning of the reign of Constantine Palaiologos, when Scholarius had not yet taken monastic vows but was already preparing to leave the world.[13]

Pléthon had written to his adversary to inform him that he had just delivered to Emperor Constantine a rebuttal to the Apology for Aristotle. At the same time, he expressed declarations of friendship. Scholarius begins his response by stating that the emperor has not yet communicated this rebuttal to him, but that he has come across the opuscule that Pléthon wrote to refute a small book defending the Latin doctrine on the procession of the Holy Spirit. He expresses surprise that Pléthon did not send him this opuscule directly, and even more so that Pléthon made no mention of Scholarius's own works on the same subject. However, Scholarius is so pleased to see the adversary of Aristotle now defending the Eastern doctrine against the Latin dogma that he forgives Pléthon in advance for everything he has written against the Stagirite (Aristotle) or against himself. He declares that he will not respond to Pléthon's new attacks. After this preamble, the letter is filled with congratulations addressed to the new defender of the Church. By attacking the Latin dogma, Pléthon has cleansed himself of the accusation that he sought to revive paganism at the expense of Christianity. On this point, Scholarius launches a formal attack against neopaganism and its adherents, whether hidden or declared. He demonstrates the superiority of Christianity over polytheism and of the Church Fathers over Plato and Aristotle. This digression is somewhat surprising in the context of an opuscule on the procession of the Holy Spirit, and it becomes clear that Scholarius is polemicizing against Pléthon even while showering him with praise. This is because, as he would later write, Scholarius had long known that the philosopher of Mistra was the author of the infamous Treatise on the Laws.

Following the refutation of polytheism, Scholarius turns to polemical considerations regarding the Latin dogma. He summarizes his ideas on the matter and reproaches Pléthon for making a dangerous concession to the Latins by attributing to the Son a kind of superiority over the Holy Spirit. This superiority is based on the fact that the Son possesses the eternal property of sending the Holy Spirit, which explains why the Son is named second in the Trinitarian formula.

The letter concludes with attacks against the Byzantine unionists and their religious policy, which Scholarius believes can only worsen the misfortunes of the homeland by provoking the wrath of God. Finally, seemingly contradicting his initial declaration, he announces that he will respond to Pléthon's rebuttal against the Apology for Aristotle with a work in which, without addressing the content of the rebuttal, he will treat Plato and Aristotle each according to their merit.

4-6. The three documents that follow are related, directly or indirectly, to the famous Treatise on the Laws by Gemistos Pléthon. Except for the Letter to the Princess of the Peloponnese, which was only published in 1912 by S. Lambros, the other documents have been known for a long time. The Letter to the Exarch Joseph first appeared in the aforementioned work of V. C. Alexandre on Pléthon, from where it was

---

[11] Alexandre, Traité des lois, Paris, 1858. Scholarius's letter is provided in the appendix, p. 313-369.

[12] P. G., t. CLX, col. 599-630.

[13] This is evident from the note inserted on fol. 186 of the Escorialensis Y. III. 13 (see p. 119, note). Although not autograph, this note, likely written by Michael Apostolios (1423–1480?), appears in a manuscript containing several autograph pieces. It states that the letter was sent from the Monastery of Kharsianitès, the very place where Scholarius undertook his monastic postulancy.

included in Migne's collection. As for the small treatise Against the Atheists and Polytheists, it was found in W. Gass's Gennadios und Pletho (Breslau, 1844, pp. 31–53), in Alexandre's work, and, according to the latter, in Migne's Patrology. Our edition improves upon the previous ones in many respects. We have been able to use three autographs for the Letter to the Exarch Joseph and four for the Treatise Against the Atheists and Polytheists.

The letter addressed to the Princess of the Peloponnese by the humble Gennadius must predate his patriarchate and even the fall of Constantinople. It is likely to be dated to the beginning of 1453. The recipient is none other than Theodora, daughter of Paul Asan and wife of Demetrius Palaiologos, Despot of Mistra from 1449. Gennadius thanks her for sending him the autograph manuscript of Pléthon's Treatise on the Laws and returns it to her so that she may consign it to the flames herself. This is the fate that such a bold manifesto in favor of polytheism deserves. On this occasion, Gennadius provides some details about the author, the content, and the sources of this work. Pléthon is compared to Julian the Apostate. From his youth, he nourished his mind with the fables of paganism and had only a rudimentary knowledge of Christianity. The Jew Elisseus, steeped in the philosophy of Averroes, exerted a predominant influence on him. The primary source he used to compose his work, which he does not mention, is Proclus. He also drew, as he himself declares, from the writings of other Neoplatonists such as Plotinus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus.

The Letter to the Exarch Joseph, written at Mount Menoeceus, thus after Gennadius's resignation from the patriarchate and shortly after this event—that is, either at the end of 1456 or in 1457—provides us with new details about Pléthon's book, its content, its structure, its sources, and its destruction, which was carried out publicly by Gennadius himself after he became patriarch. For Princess Theodora did not wish to undertake this task herself. She returned the autograph to the patriarch, who consigned it to the flames, preserving only the titles of the books and chapters as well as the hymns to the gods, so that posterity might judge the justice of the sentence. The middle of this lengthy letter is filled with a passionate discourse that Gennadius addresses directly to Pléthon, as if he were standing before him alive. He outlines a refutation of polytheism and a demonstration of divine unity (pp. 160–171). He declares that he initially intended to preserve certain parts of the book that might have been useful. However, after a thorough examination, he saw that everything in it was perilous to the faith of the faithful and that the little good it contained was merely borrowed from well-known authors. Not only was the autograph burned, but orders were given, under penalty of excommunication, to destroy any copies that might be discovered. Gennadius's instructions were followed, and of Pléthon's work, only fragments remain.

By this letter to the Exarch Joseph, we learn that the autograph of the "Treatise on Laws" was handed over, after Plethon's death, to Demetrius Palaiologos and his wife Theodora, who refused to let it be transcribed. They intended to send it immediately to Gennadius, who was not yet Patriarch but already a monk and the uncontested leader of the Anti-Unionists of Constantinople. The tragic events that soon unfolded in the capital initially prevented them from fulfilling their intention. Then, unforeseen circumstances provided them with the opportunity to deliver the work to Gennadius themselves.

It was again at the Prodrome Monastery on Mount Menaion, and no doubt shortly after the Letter to Exarch Joseph, that the small treatise entitled "On the One and Triune God and Against the Atheists and Polytheists" (pp. 172-189) was composed. Here again Plethon is targeted (pp. 180-181). Gennadius successively refutes the atheists or proponents of chance (ἄθεοι ἢ αὐτοματίσται) and the polytheists. To prove

the existence of God, he primarily appeals to the order of the world. After demonstrating the contradictions of polytheism, he attempts to persuade the Jews of the dogma of the Trinity by explaining the text of Genesis: "Let us make man in our image and after our likeness" (Gen. I, 26). Drawing from the Trinitarian theory developed by St. Thomas, he shows that the human soul is an image of the divine Trinity through its immanent operations of knowledge and love. The treatise is therefore essentially a work of Christian apologetics.

II. Pastoral and Ascetic Works

Gennadius Scholarius's pastoral works proper are those he composed while serving as Patriarch of Constantinople, and by virtue of, or in connection with, his office. These works are very few in number, which is not surprising; for although he ascended to the patriarchal throne on three different occasions, each of his patriarchates was very brief and, as he himself informs us, each was beset by all manner of intrigues and difficulties, which left him little time for writing.

If we adhere to the given definition, we can only count numbers II-VII of this section (pp. 198-235) as pastoral works. To these must be added number IX (pp. 264-274), a personal apology of his pastoral activity, written immediately after his third resignation and his final retirement to the Monastery of the Forerunner at Mount Meneceus (1464). The other pieces in this second part (numbers I, VIII, X-XIV) are designated as ascetic works, because the ascetic element predominates in them. However, they also touch upon dogmatic and moral theology and Canon Law.

1.The first piece, entitled "What a Bishop Should Know," is published here for the first time from the Parisinus 1291, an autograph copy by Sylvester Syropoulos, dated 1447. Therefore, Scholarius must have composed it prior to this date, or at the beginning of that same year. But is it truly his work? In the manuscript, of which we have provided a detailed description elsewhere, this small work appears without an author's name between two other anonymous writings, the first of which, entitled "Legatus or Concerning the Spirit," is a dialogue against the procession of the Holy Spirit a Patre et Filio belonging to Barlaam of Seminara. The reasons for attributing to Scholarius this brief summary of dogmatic and moral theology, or if you will, this small catechism, are not apodictic, but they are serious. First, there is the style, which clearly shows Scholarius's hand and is in no way unworthy of him: clarity, concision, propriety of terms, doctrinal mastery revealing the theology professor. Then, the author is equally well-versed in both Greek and Latin theology. The influence of Latin theology in the composition of the piece is evident and predominant. We have discovered one of the sources used by the author regarding the sacraments, namely the synod of Paphos on the island of Cyprus, held under Metropolitan Germanus Pessimandros, around 1260 (?). Another source, for the same subject, is the small work by the monk Job the Iasite on the seven sacraments. The author explicitly refers to the enumeration of the seven capital sins according to the Latins (τὸ τῶν Ἰταλῶν γένος, p. 194, 28). At the same place, he appears to announce a dissertation on the distinction between mortal and venial sins, a subject that Scholarius treated subsequently and which is number X of the present section. All these indicators together allow us to conclude with very high probability Scholarius's authorship, and one wonders who else could have written the piece. It must have been composed at the request of some newly elected bishop, and perhaps it was not signed.

Introduction

2.The Letter to the monk Maximus Sophianos and to all the monks of the holy monastery of Sinai is the first official document bearing the signature of Gennadius as patriarch that we have been able to collect. This signature is distinctive: It recalls not the signature of the Patriarchs of Constantinople, but that of the popes since Saint Gregory the Great. Gennadius titles himself not as Ecumenical Patriarch, but as "the servant of the children of God, the humble Gennadius." The letter was written on February 6, likely in 1455. Patriarch Nectarius of Jerusalem had given an incomplete edition in his "Epitome of Sacred-Worldly History." It was from this edition that Nicephorus Duchich published a Serbian translation with introduction in the Knijevni Radovi. We have based our edition on the Parisinus 1295, f. 1-7, from the XV-XVI century, and the Lauriotanus Athonensis A. 7, from the XVI century. This latter manuscript (as well as the Lauriotanus A.135) bears the autograph addition that appears in the Lauriotanus 2. 43, from which we have borrowed it. Several other manuscripts, including the Parisinus 1295, do not have this addition, in which Scholarius recommends frequent communion, while emphasizing the preparation required for it and advising against any practice that would lead to a lack of respect toward the Holy Sacrament. The suppression of this passage in certain manuscripts can be explained by the controversies that took place, at various times, in the Athonite monasteries, regarding frequent and daily communion.

The content of the letter revolves around a series of canonical and liturgical questions. They are of the highest interest. Particularly noteworthy is what he says regarding the participation of Latins and Armenians in the sacraments and liturgical ceremonies of the Eastern Church. Gennadius does not treat the Latins as heretics, but calls them heterodox, separated, dissidents: ἐσχισμένοι, κεχωρισμένοι, ἑτερόδοξοι. He certainly forbids giving them communion, unless they retract their errors and accept the dogmas of the Eastern Church; but he permits distributing to them the antidoron or blessed bread and admitting them to participate in the Panagia, when they come as pilgrims to Mount Sinai. Orthodox prelates may bless them and allow them to kiss their hand.

The Bishop of Bosnia (ἐπίσκοπος ὁ ἀπὸ Πόσνας) who is mentioned in the third question is probably Metropolitan David, who died in 1466. As for the heretics called Kudugeri, of whom the Latins have converted a great number, they must be identified with the Bogomils according to Symeon of Thessalonica.

In the fifth question, Gennadius denounces with tears the evil of simony that plagues the Orthodox Church, an evil against which he himself has fought in vain and which is made inevitable in certain places by the domination of infidel princes. He exhorts the monks not to be scandalized by what is happening. The Church, he says, has returned to the time that preceded Constantine the Great, to the primitive period of persecutions. Ecclesiastical canons can no longer be observed in their rigor. One must renounce exactitude and often use economy, adhering to the essential. He is preoccupied with broadening the spirit of the good monks and making them understand that the Church's current situation makes impossible the exact observance of disciplinary canons and liturgical rubrics. It is time to prepare for martyrdom, and not to quibble over the typicon. Whoever wishes to maintain a contrary conduct not only encounters the impossible but becomes an enemy of Christianity.

The brief Letter to monk Joachim of Sinai is merely an appendix to the previous letter, which it typically follows in the manuscripts. Its purpose is to regulate the conduct to be maintained toward priests and deacons suspected of Latinism. Clergy of this type can be received into the Church and permitted to exercise their order if they do penance, pronounce a profession of faith, and promise to be faithful. This is how, says

Gennadius, in accordance with the canons of the holy councils, we have treated the Latin-minded clergy, and thus we have pacified the world, *καὶ εἰρευνήσαμεν τὸν κόσμον*. The passage on the primacy of Saint Peter is noteworthy. The piece had already been published by Nicephorus Kalogheras in 1887, in volume I of Euthymius Zigabenus's commentary on the fourteen Pauline epistles and the seven catholic epistles.

A series of fifteen very brief responses on questions of dogmatic, canonical, and liturgical nature is addressed to the Despot of Serbia, George I Branković (1427-1456). An incomplete edition, lacking responses 8 and 15, had been made by Manuel Gedeon in 1889; a second, even more incomplete one, where responses 4, 6, 8, and 14 do not appear, had been published in Ecclesiastical Truth in 1899. Finally, in 1905, E. von Dobschütz provided a longer text based on cod. Dresd. A. 187, accompanied by an introduction and commentary. It is this edition that we reproduce, noting the variants with previous editions. Exegetes will note response 14 concerning the third heaven, of which Saint Paul speaks.

3.The lengthy Pastoral Letter on the Fall of Constantinople, written at the Pammakaristos Monastery in Constantinople in autumn 1454, appears here for the first time according to the autograph Parisinus 1289. It is highly important for understanding Scholarius's biography, character, pastoral activity, and the troubled environment in which he exercised it. At the time of writing, he is deeply disgusted with his charge and speaks of withdrawing, faced with criticism, intrigues, and the futility of his efforts to suppress abuses in the Church. He extensively emphasizes the idea that the catastrophe of 1453 was a divine punishment provoked by the sins of the Christian people and their civil and religious leaders. He sees in the attempts at union with the Latins an abandonment and betrayal of ancestral faith. The catastrophe, he and others had foreseen and had been announcing it for a long time, based on Providence's ordinary conduct in governing peoples. He then provides some details about his forced elevation to the patriarchate, which was done by a synod of bishops, but on the sultan's order, who still prevents him from resigning. If he accepted the patriarchal charge, it was because he believed he could do useful work for his brothers, the Christians; and indeed, his elevation has had some positive results: he has restored churches and sanctuaries, freed monks from prison, who have poorly repaid his services and are the most insubordinate and scandalous element of his flock. The Church has been reorganized as if by miracle. But his zeal encounters insurmountable obstacles. Far from being useful, his presence at the head of the Church becomes harmful. He is therefore decided to withdraw.

4.The short pastoral letter that follows is a complement to the previous one. It was hitherto unpublished. We have extracted it from Iberitanus 248, from the XVI century, described in volume I. It was written shortly after the first, at the beginning of the tenth month of Gennadius's patriarchate, that is, October 7, 1454, if this patriarchate truly began in 1454. Indeed, at the end of this piece, Gennadius informs us that he received episcopal ordination on the day of Epiphany, that is, January 6. He declares that he had set October 7, 1454, as the ultimate deadline for resigning; but on the advice of those who have the power to release him, he willingly consents to wait another three months, until a complete year has elapsed since his ordination. If he had kept his word, it would have been on January 6, 1455, that he would have ended his first patriarchate.[14]

---

[14] It is very difficult to determine the exact dates and duration of Scholarius's patriarchates. Serious evidence, derived from his works, allows us to assert with great probability, if not with certainty, that the first patriarchate lasted until the spring of 1456, as we wrote in the introduction to Volume I. What is less certain is the year in which this patriarchate began. It seems difficult to push this beginning back to January 6, 1455. However, if this date were accurate, it would mean that the first patriarchate, according to the letter we have just mentioned, lasted only one year (January 6, 1455 - January 6, 1456).

5.The nun Sophrosyne, to whom Gennadius writes a short note to announce the sending of his work "On the First Service of God or Summary of the Evangelical Law" and to give her ascetic advice, is said to be the sister of the empress or princess. Who is this princess? Sp. Lambros, who first published this letter, thinks it refers to Theodora Asanina, wife of Demetrius Palaeologus, despot of Mistra. As for Sophrosyne, she would be the same as Simonis Palaeologina, to whom Scholarius, already as monk Gennadius, addressed a first letter sometime before the fall of Constantinople, which is the last of those we publish under Gennadius's name in the Correspondence section. Upon taking the monastic habit, Simonis would have changed her name to Sophrosyne. We fully agree with Lambros on this point. Like him, we believe that Sophrosyne, who according to Scholarius's letter is far from Constantinople, entered some monastery in the Peloponnese. But contrary to what the learned Byzantinist suggests, who has Gennadius write both letters as patriarch, we think that the letter to Simonis dates from before the fall of Constantinople. Gennadius signs it "The least, Gennadius," the designation of a monk. In contrast, the second bears "The servant of the children of God, Gennadius," the title chosen by the patriarch, as we mentioned above. And it is not from Gennadius's first patriarchate, for the small work sent to Sophrosyne was composed at the Monastery of the Forerunner at Mount Meneceus in 1458. The letter is therefore posterior to this date. One has the choice between 1462-1463 and 1464, that is, between the second patriarchate and the third.

6."On the First Service of God or The Evangelical Law in Brief" is the title of one of Scholarius's best and most celebrated short works. Before the present edition, there were two Greek editions: that of Sergius Macraios, Constantinople, 1806, and that of Nicodemus the Hagiorite, "Garden of Graces," Venice, 1819, pp. 223-249. We have only noted the variants between Macraios's edition and ours, which is established from three autograph copies. An autograph note in the Parisinus 1289 informs us of the place and date of composition: at the Monastery of the Forerunner at Mount Meneceus, after the resignation from the patriarchate, in 1458; and the equally autograph inscription of the Parisinus 1294 declares that the work was composed at the request of a monk friend. It is an excellent summary of evangelical morality, preceded by a brief dogmatic introduction. It is divided into 40 small chapters, followed by a brief epilogue. Scriptural citations and allusions abound. This work, through its clarity, concision, and doctrinal density, is a small masterpiece and would deserve to be translated into all languages.

7.In number IX, entitled "Apology Concerning the Silence" (kept by Scholarius against his detractors), we have an unpublished autograph of capital importance for the history of Scholarius's activity as patriarch and for the study of his personal character. This apology was addressed to an intimate friend, Theodore Branas, shortly after the third and final resignation from the patriarchal office, thus in 1464, when Scholarius had already returned to the Monastery of the Forerunner. In the person of Theodore Branas, it is to all his true friends that Scholarius addresses this final apology to explain his definitive retreat and the silence he long maintained regarding the attacks of his detractors and the causes of his resignation. It is a bitter indictment against false brothers, whose disorders, intrigues, and attacks against his person forced him to withdraw. He alludes to the incredible things that happened two years ago, thus in 1462. He salutes in the sultan the benefactor of the Church, which evil Christians devastate. If he left, it was because it was impossible to accomplish the least good in the midst of such an unleashing of unspeakable passions, persecutions of all kinds, which recall those suffered by David, Our Lord, Saint John Chrysostom, Saint Flavian of Constantinople. To stay would have required compromising with iniquity. He bitterly reproaches himself for

having allowed himself to be swayed by the necessity of the faithful and the violence done to him to occupy himself several times with tasks unworthy of him. He alludes thereby to his second and third patriarchates. This last one lasted more than a year.

8.In number X, we have a dissertation on moral theology. It concerns marking the difference that exists between mortal sins and venial sins. The short work had already been published by Sergius Macraios in 1806, following the "Evangelical Law." We provide the text according to the Parisian autograph 1289. It must have been composed at the Monastery of the Forerunner, at a date we are presently unable to fix. Scholarius's doctrine on the subject treated generally agrees with that of Catholic theologians. However, it differs on an important point. According to the Byzantine theologian, one must distinguish three kinds of mortal or venial sins: those that are consummated in thought, those that are consummated by the tongue, and those that are consummated by external action. Sins consummated in thought, if their matter is grave, are mortal sins. But sins consummated by the tongue, that is, by speech, are mortal only if they effectively proceed from thought to be translated into words; if they stop at the first stage of simple thought, they are only venial sins. Similarly, sins that are consummated by external action, like adultery, will be mortal sins only at the last stage, that of action. At the state of simple thought, even at the state of speech, they will only be venial sins. This ingenious theory is not accepted by Catholic theology, which places mortal sin, for all grave matter, in full internal consent given with full awareness. Scholarius also sees mortal sin in full internal consent, but only for sins which, like hatred and envy, are consummated in the internal act itself. The same work also briefly treats the capital vices and opposing virtues.

11-12. The following two pieces: "Exhortation to a Sinner" (pp. 284-295) and "Letter of Consolation" (pp. 295-300) are simple fragments without titles, contained in the Parisinus Supplement 681, an autograph described in the introduction of Volume I. These rather lengthy fragments, the second of which is indecipherable in several places, appear to be Scholarius's own work, rather than mere copies of writings belonging to others. However, it is possible that these are merely literary exercises, as they give us somewhat of this impression.

In the first piece, Scholarius addresses a negligent Christian who has essentially abandoned all religious practice. He attempts to bring him back to a truly Christian life. He particularly emphasizes the sanctification of Sunday through attendance at liturgical offices, edifying readings, and abstention from servile works. Canonists will note what is stated on page 290, line 30 and following: "The Church customarily excommunicates anyone who fails to appear at church for three consecutive Sundays."

The Letter of Consolation is addressed to someone who has lost relatives in a city ravaged by plague. Scholarius develops both natural and supernatural reasons capable of alleviating this friend's grief. He emphasizes the fragility of present life and regards public calamities as just chastisements—albeit paternal ones—from God's justice.

The various thoughts arranged under number XIII (pp. 300-306), which we found in the Lauriotanus 116.K manuscript from the 16th century, are not of unquestionable authenticity. These are undoubtedly detached thoughts found among Scholarius's papers after his death. Some may be extracted from sermons or other lost writings. There is, moreover, nothing particularly significant here.

More worthy of attention and of incontestable authenticity are the brief questions appearing under number XIV (pp. 306-309). These have been preserved for us in the Rossianus 986, which contains several

other writings by our author. Several appear to be drawn from the summaries of the Thomistic Summas published in volumes V and VI. The most important is the one concerning the sacrament of the Eucharist. Scholarius clearly teaches that the true form of the Eucharist, that which effects transubstantiation, is constituted by the words of the Lord: "This is my body" and "This is my blood." The prayers, and therefore the epiclesis, are intended to manifest the minister's express intention to consecrate.

III. Liturgical Works.

Scholarius left behind a number of small compositions in both prose and verse related to liturgy. Most of these are short prayers addressed to God or His saints. Almost all of them were previously unpublished. Under the title "Liturgical Works," we have only included the prose pieces. The compositions in metric or syllabic verse are categorized among the poetic works, which will be discussed shortly.

1.Of the twelve items in this section, the first one, titled "Prayers for Metanies and Partial Summaries of the Psalms" (pp. 310-343), is by far the longest, as it is equivalent in length to all the others combined. It is divided into two nearly equal parts: the "Prayers for Metanies" (pp. 310-327) and the "Partial Summaries of the Psalms" (pp. 327-343). Two Athonite manuscripts, either autograph or quasi-autograph, have preserved these pieces for us: Dionysianus 440 and Lauriolanus E. 84. The description of Lauriolanus E. 84, which contains only the first part, has already been provided in Volume III, pp. XXVI-XXVII. As for Dionysianus 440, here is what can be said about it:

It is Athous 3974 in the catalog of Sp. Lambros, from the 15th century, measuring 19.5 × 13.5 cm; 204 folios. It is mutilated at the beginning. Written by several hands. On folio 83, there is this note: "The gift of God and the labor of Dositheos: † year,σ.θ.ξ.ς': indiction,679 (= 1458)."

1.(ff. 1-100): Offices of the week extracted from the Horologion and the Octoechos. Other prayers have been inserted, including several by John Eugenikos.

2.(ff. 100-131): "From the most wise and learned, and most holy Patriarch of Constantinople, Kyrios Gennadius, prayers of repentance and partial summaries of the psalms in summary. Glory to you, Lord our God, glory to you." The writing is not in Scholarius's hand, but there is hardly a page that does not bear some correction, addition, or annotation by him. The actual prayers (ff. 100-116) are followed by the abridged Psalter (ff. 116-130). This begins with a short preface, after which the copyist has transcribed (f. 116) an introduction to the spurious Soliloquies of St. Augustine translated by Demetrius Cydones, but by mistake, as Scholarius points out, first in the text, then in a note.

3.(ff. 131-132) by another hand: "Prayer of Kyrios Manuel the Rhetor. Inc. Most hymned my lady mistress Theotokos."

4.(ff. 183-177): Title by Scholarius's hand; the rest by the hand that wrote no. 2 + "Of the blessed Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, what a soul would say, alone to God alone. Inc. I would know you, Lord, who know me." This is the translation of the spurious Soliloquies of St. Augustine mentioned above, which Nicodemus the Hagiorite published in his "Epitome from the Davidic Psalms," Constantinople, 1799, pp. 193-254.

5.(f. 177): Epigram by Michael Kritopoulos on the preceding work. Nicodemus, op. cit., p. 192.
6.(ff. 178-180): Prayer by Michael Kritopoulos. ibid., pp. 170-174.
7.(ff. 181-204): Supplicatory Canon of St. Andrew of Crete and other prayers extracted from the Euchologion.

The prayers for metanies are a collection of prayers from various authors. Only the first and ninth prayers bear the name of Scholarius. The third and tenth might also be his compositions. The others appear under the names of saints or famous figures. The fifth and sixth were included by Nicodemus in the "Epitome from the Davidic Psalms" previously mentioned.

The first prayer, a series of short invocations meant to be recited during the Eastern prostrations known as metanies, ends with the translation of the Marian antiphon from the Latin Breviary "Ave, Regina Caelorum," missing only the words "Salve porta." This is not the only place where Scholarius referred to the Latin euchologion. At the end of the ninth prayer, Scholarius's work, the translation of the collect from the common of the feasts of the Holy Virgin can be read in Lauriotanus E. 84, f. 9: "Concede nos, famulos tuos," etc. This ninth prayer, the longest of all, was composed by the monk Gennadius before his patriarchate, thus between 1450 and 1454. It is touching in its humility, compunction, and gratitude. Several passages are dogmatically significant: the necessity of grace and its mode of efficacy on the human will.

The "Partial Summary of the Psalms" or "Prayers Drawn from the Psalms" is preceded by a short introduction that indicates the nature and purpose of this curious collection. It is, one might say, a sort of small breviary for monks living in solitude in their cells, especially hesychasts. Scholarius composed it for his personal use and thought it might be useful to others. His work involved retaining from the psalms only the direct prayers, the outpourings of the heart addressed to the Lord. These are, in truth, the prayers extracted from the psalms through which the soul speaks directly to God. This breviary, which fits in less than fifteen pages, had already been published twice: first in Bucharest in 1749, then by Nicodemus the Hagiorite in Constantinople in 1799, in the aforementioned work. We provide the text of Dionysianus 440, reviewed and corrected by Scholarius himself. Noteworthy (p. 328, in note) is the curious autograph note on St. Augustine, reiterating what our Byzantine has several times written elsewhere on the doctrinal authority of this Father.

2-12. Of the eleven prayers that follow, eight are published here for the first time, namely numbers II, III, V, VII, IX, X, XI, and XII. All, except numbers IV, VI, and VIII, are drawn from autograph manuscripts. They are both full of piety and doctrine. The first three are addressed to God the Father, the next two to the one and triune God, the next four to Jesus Christ, the penultimate to the Holy Virgin, and the last to all the saints, angels, and humans. Scholarius did not forget any of the inhabitants of the celestial city.

Number III is a paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer, in which the author always directly addresses God the Father by explaining and developing the seven petitions of the Pater.

The prayer for the deliverance of the Peloponnese, which appears under no. IV, is dated 1454 by Sp. Lambros, with Gennadius already being Patriarch. However, we believe that it belongs to Gennadius as a simple monk and that it was composed on the occasion of Tourakhan's attack on the Peloponnese, thus in 1452-1453. The same event is linked to the "Paraklesis" or canon for the salvation of the Peloponnese, also published by Lambros, which we have classified among the poetic works, no. XI, pp. 385-389. Judging by the

respective positions these two pieces occupy in Rossianus 986, the only manuscript that has preserved them for us, the canon must have been composed shortly before the prayer in prose. It seems unlikely that Gennadius, as Patriarch, would have referred to the Turks as bloodthirsty dogs of Agar (οἱ τῆς Ἄγαρ αἱμοβόροι κύνες) or insolent wild beasts (τοῖς ὑπερόπλοις θηρσί). Furthermore, we question whether it is well established that the Albanian uprising, to which Scholarius seems to allude, actually occurred after the fall of Constantinople.

Except for the Public Prayer of Patriarch Gennadius, which he read aloud before the people after the celebration of the liturgy in the Church of the Holy Apostles[15] and which likely dates from his first patriarchate (no. VI, pp. 352-355), it is very difficult to assign a precise date to the other prayers. Gennadius probably wrote them during his long retreat at the Prodrome Monastery. This is certainly the case for nos. X, XI, and XII, and also VII-VIII.

IV. Poetic Works.

Like many great men, Scholarius also wrote poetry, verses that are not unworthy of his name and do not tarnish his glory as a writer. These are not, however, long compositions but short pieces, the longest of which do not exceed four pages: thirteen items in total. The first ten are in metric verse; the others belong to the rhythmic poetry of Christian melodies.

Among these, we count three authentic epitaphs (nos. I, V, VI) and a fourth very doubtful one (no. X) addressed to Marc of Ephesus, already published twice. The reasons for doubting the authenticity of the latter are both internal and external. Regarding its content, we find it quite prosaic and lacking any personal sentiment, any cry from the heart, as one might expect when considering Scholarius's state of mind at the time of the metropolitan of Ephesus's death. A more important clue: This piece appears only in 16th-century manuscripts. It is undoubtedly found in Parisinus 1218, which is mostly in a 15th-century hand, but Marc's epitaph was inserted by a later hand in fol. 471, from which Abraham Norov extracted it. Besides this manuscript, it is only mentioned in Iberiticus 248, from the 16th century, which we borrowed from Sp. Lambros. Its place was evidently in Parisinus 1292, partially autographed, before or after the Funeral Oration of Marc. However, it is missing from this manuscript, entirely from the 15th century and filled with the works of Marc and Scholarius.[16]

IV. Poetic Works.

---

[15] This is what is read in Escorialensis Y. III. 13, which contains several autographic writings of Scholarius, and some from his contemporary, Michael Apostolios. This prayer had already been published by N. Kalogheras, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 4 * s' - ρ * a', who provided a lengthy commentary on it. It is an act of contrition, in which Gennadius confesses the sins of his people and implores divine mercy. Not the slightest allusion, not the slightest disparaging term directed at the unfaithful rulers.

[16] When he wrote the article "Marc of Ephesus" in the Dictionnaire de théologie catholique, vol. IX, col. 1972, Mr. L. Petit still believed in the authenticity of the piece. However, on the page of Lambros' Παλαιολόγεια, vol. II, p. 41, which contains the epitaph in question, he wrote: "To be omitted," without further indication. This led us to examine it more closely. On the other hand, in the same article in the Dictionnaire de théologie, ibid., Mr. Petit declared that the Epigram on Marc Eugenicos, also published by Lambros under the name of Scholarios, op. cit., p. 42, was not by the latter but was addressed to Marc the Hermit and was authored by Marc of Ephesus himself. Cf. G. Mercati, Bessarione, 1920, p. 134. The Γ'Ἐξήγησις γραμμάτων εὑρεθέντων ἐν μνημείῳ τοῦ μεγάλου Κωνσταντίνου, attributed by some manuscripts to Georges Scholarios and published at the end of the Chronicle edited by Matthien Tzigalas in 1637, republished by Dethier in his Opuscula de Constantinopolis excidio, vol. I, pp. 468 et seq., should also be considered apocryphal. This piece is also found at the end of the Chronicle of Dorotheus, edited by Banduri, Imper. orient., vol. I, p. 184.

Introduction

Like many great men, Scholarius also wrote poetry, verses that are not unworthy of his name and do not tarnish his glory as a writer. These are not, however, long compositions but short pieces, the longest of which do not exceed four pages: thirteen items in total. The first ten are in metric verse; the others belong to the rhythmic poetry of Christian melodies.

Among these, we count three authentic epitaphs (nos. I, V, VI) and a fourth very doubtful one (no. X) addressed to Marc of Ephesus, already published twice. The reasons for doubting the authenticity of the latter are both internal and external. Regarding its content, we find it quite prosaic and lacking any personal sentiment, any cry from the heart, as one might expect when considering Scholarius's state of mind at the time of the metropolitan of Ephesus's death. A more important clue: This piece appears only in 16th-century manuscripts. It is undoubtedly found in Parisinus 1218, which is mostly in a 15th-century hand, but Marc's epitaph was inserted by a later hand in fol. 471, from which Abraham Norov extracted it. Besides this manuscript, it is only mentioned in Iberiticus 248, from the 16th century, which we borrowed from Sp. Lambros. Its place was evidently in Parisinus 1292, partially autographed, before or after the Funeral Oration of Marc. However, it is missing from this manuscript, entirely from the 15th century and filled with the works of Marc and Scholarius.

When he wrote the article "Marc of Ephesus" in the Dictionnaire de théologie catholique, vol. IX, col. 1972, Mr. L. Petit still believed in the authenticity of the piece. However, on the page of Lambros' Παλαιολόγεια, vol. II, p. 41, which contains the epitaph in question, he wrote: "To be omitted," without further indication. This led us to examine it more closely. On the other hand, in the same article in the Dictionnaire de théologie, ibid., Mr. Petit declared that the Epigram on Marc Eugenicos, also published by Lambros under the name of Scholarios, op. cit., p. 42, was not by the latter but was addressed to Marc the Hermit and was authored by Marc of Ephesus himself. Cf. G. Mercati, Bessarione, 1920, p. 134. The "Γ'Εξήγησις γραμμάτων εὑρεθέντων ἐν μνημείῳ τοῦ μεγάλου Κωνσταντίνου," attributed by some manuscripts to Georges Scholarios and published at the end of the Chronicle edited by Matthien Tzigalas in 1637, republished by Dethier in his Opuscula de Constantinopolis excidio, vol. I, pp. 468 et seq., should also be considered apocryphal. This piece is also found at the end of the Chronicle of Dorotheus, edited by Banduri, Imper. orient., vol. I, p. 184.

Number II is not an original work but a simple prose translation of a hymn by Synesius in honor of the Incarnate Word. (Cf. P. G., vol. LXVI, col. 1608-1609.)

Number V is a collection of six short prayers. Except for the second, they use the Homeric dialect. Two autographs, Pantocratorinus 127 and Parisinus 1292, have preserved them for us, and according to the inscription of the latter manuscript, they belong to the group of writings composed at Mount Menaion. They were previously unpublished.

All the other metric pieces, except the Epitaph of Macarius, abbot of Pantocrator (no. V), had already been published by one or more authors. The iambic acrostic (no. VII) even received the honors of a French translation by Théodore Reinach. Although found only in two 18th-century manuscripts, the small piece entitled "Alphabetical Exhortation to the Young" (no. IX) appears authentic and is not unworthy of Scholarius.

Of the three canons that follow the metric compositions, the first: "Prayer for the Salvation of the Peloponnese," had already been published by S. Lambros, and the second: "Canon in Honor of Gregory

Palamas," had been given to the journal Γρηγόριος Παλαμᾶς (1921), based on the autograph copy of Vaticanus 172, by X. A. Siderides. It will be noted that these editions needed to be amended. We are sure that our late collaborator, if he were still alive, would have readily agreed to the corrections we made on the autograph itself. We have already discussed above the date of the first canon.

The "Melodic Hymn to God" (no. XII) comes, in the autograph Parisinus 1289, after a piece dated 1466. This is an indication that it must have been composed by the monk Gennadius at Mount Menaion in the last period of his life. Despite the title, the prayer is not only addressed to the one and triune God but also to all the inhabitants of the celestial city. One hears the voice of the theologian and the accents of the monk filled with compunction.

The "Canon to Gregory Palamas" is important for informing us about Scholarius's true position on the issue of Palamism, at least at a certain period of his life. The praises he gives to the author of this doctrine are in no way inferior to those of the service composed by Patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos and inserted into the Triodion. We believe that the piece was composed between the years 1444-1450, the period of the main polemical writings. The very writing of Vaticanus 172 reveals a younger hand than that which held the pen in the autographs of the later years. Moreover, within the canon itself, there are evident allusions to the confused situation in Byzantium, from a religious point of view, after the Union of Florence until the fall of Constantinople.[17]

V. Correspondence.

The 41 letters that we have gathered under the title "Correspondence" do not represent all those that have reached us from Scholarius's pen. Many, in fact, have already been published in the previous volumes or inserted earlier in the framework of this Volume IV, as they constitute true didactic treatises addressed to various individuals or relate to writings of this kind. But those that are part of the present series better fit what we call "letters." Except in rare cases, any didactic purpose is excluded. They only concern the familiar interactions that the author maintains with his correspondents to communicate daily news, express personal feelings, and share what affects or interests them.

Among these letters, five had already been published by Boissonnade in Volume V of his Anecdota graeca, Paris, 1838, based on Parisinus 1760, from the 15th century; one by Émile Legrand, in 1891; another by L. Petit, in 1920. As early as 1912, Sp. Lambros had collected them all in Volume II of his Παλαιολόγεια καὶ Πελοποννησιακά. Our edition does not bring any new pieces. But it has the advantage of: 1) presenting almost everywhere a significantly improved text, either through new autograph sources or a better reading of the latter or others used by our predecessors; 2) establishing a certain or approximate chronology for most of the numbers. Sp. Lambros, in his edition, did not concern himself with chronology but arranged the pieces into three groups according to the three main manuscripts containing them. He placed at the end the group from Laurentianus Pl. 74, cod. 13, which gives us the oldest letters, and put at the beginning the correspondence with Luc Notaras (Parisinus 1760), which belongs to the last years before the fall of Constantinople. Moreover, he ignored that Scholarius became a monk exactly in 1450, taking from that date

[17] For example, see the fourth stanza of the ninth ode: "We were all filled with lamentation and tears, seeing again now the Church of Christ grievously afflicted; but through your prayers, restore its former and steadfast proclamation of the ancestral doctrines." (p. 397, 99-31). These allusions did not escape X. Siderides in the short preface to his edition.

the name Gennadius; that Parisinus 1289 was an autograph, and that all the letters it contains are prior to the fall of Constantinople, according to the author's own testimony. With these new data, it was relatively easy for us to distribute the 41 letters in question into two distinct series, all of which are earlier than May 1453. Some are signed "Georges," meaning before his entry into religion (1450); others bear the name of the monk Gennadius (1450-1453). The long letter XXXIV, addressed to Emperor Constantine, at the moment when Scholarius says farewell to the world (pp. 463-473), marks the transition from one series to the other.

We are convinced that the collection of Laurentianus Pl. 74, cod. 13, which one might be tempted to take for an autograph, and which includes 18 pieces, arranges the letters in chronological order. These belong to the first period of Scholarius's literary activity. The first ones are from the philosophy professor, who still bears the name Georges Kourtézis. They were written between 1430-1440. The last one, which is the letter to Marc of Ephesus (no. XXIV), almost certainly dates from 1440. Guided by this thread, we cannot place letter XVI (to Philelphe) between 1439 and 1453, as Lambros does, but in 1437 or 1438, because it precedes, in the collection, the letter to Alexis Lascaris, which is from 1438.

We also disagree with the Athenian Byzantinist on the date of the letter to Raoul Kabakès (no. XXX). According to him, this letter dates from 1437, the year of the first reconciliation of the two despots of the Peloponnese, Theodore and Constantine. According to us, it concerns a later reconciliation between Demetrius and Thomas, which should be placed around 1450. Indeed, in this letter, Scholarius alludes to his correspondence with Gemistos Plethon. He speaks of the latter's treatise against the Latins and gives an unequivocal description of it. He announces that he is sending him a long letter to thank and congratulate him. This undoubtedly refers to the long Letter to Plethon concerning his work against the Latins, which we have situated earlier in 1450.

Regarding Scholarius's correspondents, one may fruitfully consult the information and conjectures of Sp. Lambros in the introduction to Volume II of Παλαιολόγεια καὶ Πελοποννησιακά. The chronology of the letters we have adopted might provide scholars the opportunity to offer new precisions on this subject.

In reviewing this correspondence, Byzantinists will have observed all the interest it presents both for the history of the last twenty years before the fall of the empire and for the study of the character and politico-religious role of Georges-Gennadius Scholarius during the most important period of his existence. Among the most interesting letters, we highlight to the reader's attention:

1.Letter no. II, to his students (pp. 403-410), on the decline of literary and philosophical culture in Byzantium during the author's time, compared with Western scholasticism and the nascent humanism of Italy.

2.Letter no. V (pp. 413-416), to his student John, on the unionist negotiations that preceded the Council of Florence.

3.Letter to Pope Eugene IV (no. XV, pp. 432-433), written before the council, which a fervent Catholic addressing the common Father of the faithful could sign.

4.Letter to Ambrose Traversari (no. XXI, pp. 440-441) asking him for a small corner of his monastery where he can lodge, without disturbing the community, during the sessions of the council in Florence.

5.The long letter to Emperor Constantine (no. XXXIV, pp. 463-473), written on the eve of donning the monastic habit; crucial for Scholarius's biography, revealing his youthful vow to

leave the world to serve God, the obstacles that prevented him from realizing his plan earlier, the attacks from the jealous and envious against his person, and the timeliness of his retreat when the emperor shows him all his friendship.

6.Letter to Manuel Raoul Oisēs (no. II of the second series, pp. 476-489), which recounts the curious and sad story of the adventurer Juvenal, an apostate dreaming of restoring pagan religion, and outlines, with a lively and sure pen, the rules of the Church's coercive power against heretics and apostates: what one might call the theology of the Inquisition. Scholarius's doctrine on this delicate question is both moderate and vigorous and aligns, overall, with the doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church.

7.Letter to Grand Duke Luc Notaras (no. V of the second series, pp. 494-500), hiding under hyperbolic flattery a criticism of the opportunistic policy practiced by the grand duke concerning the union with the Latins. This letter announces another dogmatic one, which was published in Volume III. Therefore, it should be dated to the same period: 1451-1452.

VI. Historical Works.

It will be said that Scholarius touched on all genres, even proper history. It is true that what he left in this matter is reduced to very little, namely a few pages of a curious Chronography, ranging from Adam to the year 1472 and announcing the end of the world for the year 1493/1494, this year 1494 coinciding, according to his calculation, with the end of the seventh millennium since the creation of man. This Chronography, published here for the first time from the autograph Parisinus 1289, is remarkable especially for the note on the destinies of the Byzantine Empire (pp. 510-511) and the curious coincidences it highlights in this regard.

Works of George Scholarius.

Polemic Against Gemistos Plethon.

I. Against Plethon's Difficulties Concerning Aristotle.

† By George Scholarius, Against Plethon's Objections to Aristotle.

1. Prologue.

1. As I considered, most noble and serene leader Constantine, what I might offer to you now, as is my custom, something fitting both to my own pursuits in intellectual discourse and to the breadth of your royal wisdom and knowledge, it seemed necessary to me to take as the occasion and subject of this offering the book of blasphemies against Aristotle, which recently came into my hands. At the same time, I recalled a promise I made to you when you happily departed from us to assume the great governance of the Peloponnese. For you asked me whether we would dare to respond to Plethon on behalf of Aristotle, not doubting but rather provoking us. Yet I undertook this task neither out of contempt for Plethon's work, as one might suppose—for the man is otherwise held in high esteem by us among the Greeks of today—nor out of fear for Aristotle, lest someone might think him insignificant, persuaded by Plethon. For Aristotle's reputation among all wise men—or rather, among all mankind—is sufficient to defend him. Nor would anyone ever descend to such folly as to prefer Plethon's judgments against Aristotle over those of all humanity, who have regarded Aristotle's work as something divine, not now or recently, but ever since nature brought him forth, like some other worldly good. Nor did I expect to gain much praise for defending the philosopher, who is unjustly maligned by those who ought not to do so. For those who choose to defend such matters, which are least endangered by such blasphemies, ought to endure even greater criticism from those who possess reason. For it is the same as denying the brightness of the sun or Aristotle's reputation for wisdom. Therefore, just as it would be equally fitting to despise—or rather, to eagerly seek to cure—those who suffer from such afflictions, if it is possible, so too it is permissible for Plethon and anyone else of similar mind to accuse Aristotle, though no one has ever attacked his divine wisdom with such recklessness. But if it is permissible to defend his reputation, it must first be acknowledged by the many wise men among many nations who uphold Aristotle's doctrines. For Plethon, who alone transgresses against Aristotle, could not do so even if he wished to join others in this. But for one who upholds what is just toward Aristotle, all who have benefited similarly ought to defend and support him. And they would rightly be indignant if they were not called to the same struggle, especially when the reputation of their teacher is endangered by the skill—or perhaps the lesser skill—of one man. Since, therefore, I have undertaken this task not for any of the reasons mentioned above but for the reasons stated at the outset, neither Aristotle himself would be justly

grieved, nor would anyone else have cause to complain. And you, most noble leader, would surely understand and even approve, especially since, owing to your authority, we have chosen a fitting endeavor for the present occasion, and in deciding what to pursue, we have consulted you as an advisor who greatly desires to hear such discourses, while also being devoted to Aristotle. And you would surely be pleased with those who speak the truth and what is just on his behalf.

2. Plethon claims that the ancient Greek and Roman sages preferred Plato to Aristotle, though none of them so esteemed Plato as to compose a separate work against Aristotle. On the contrary, they expounded the sciences that Aristotle, with extraordinary insight, had distinguished and defined for all the genera of being, undertaking great labor in doing so, believing that this was beneficial both to themselves and to all mankind. They considered Aristotle alone worthy to be and to remain the guide of all humanity in philosophy. They did not, of course, feel the same way about Plato. And when they interpreted Aristotle, they occasionally noted his disagreements with Plato, but they did not recklessly attack him on this account. Some, having judged both more fairly, reconciled the two philosophers in their teachings, saying that Aristotle's disagreement with Plato pertained only to the appearance of their expressions, arising not from ignorance but perhaps from a rivalry that had some justification. Plethon ought to praise their judgment and pray that such wisdom might also be granted to him, for he cannot claim to be better than those around Simplicius. But those men, and before them those around Syrianus, Proclus, and Porphyry—whom I consider to be among the wisest—held this view of Aristotle. Plethon, however, having never written anything significant in philosophy, has now, late in life, produced these blasphemies against Aristotle, as the proverb says, "The mountain has labored and brought forth a mouse." It is as if someone, having remained motionless all his life, suddenly gained the ability to use his limbs through some contrivance and first employed his hands to strike his father. If anyone has just cause to criticize Aristotle, it is for his cunning in claiming the first place over Plato. But one would have far greater cause to criticize Plethon, whose disagreement with Aristotle is not comparable to Aristotle's with Plato but is such that no comparison is even possible. Aristotle, though he may have been somewhat overbearing toward Plato, perhaps achieved something for himself. But Plethon, in opposing Aristotle, risks not only failing to appear wiser than Aristotle but also revealing his own ignorance of him. He is far inferior to those who now pursue philosophy, for they justly divide their attention between Plato and Aristotle without despising either, and they owe Aristotle even greater gratitude, since they derive from him the ability to critique him. In this, they follow the example of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Plethon, however, alone attempts to portray Aristotle as ignorant and erring in all aspects of philosophy, like a child. If there have been or are now any philosophers better than those ancients who preferred Plato, I might hesitate to say so, but many will affirm it and demonstrate it in practice. As for those in Italy who are now devoted to Plato, to whom Plethon says he dedicates this work, we know who they are, and many have seen them associating with him there. They have as much understanding of philosophy as Plethon has of dancing. They are preoccupied with Homer and Virgil, and they extend their studies to Cicero and Demosthenes, though they are not particularly gifted even in these. Those who have been captivated by Plato's muse believe that there is no philosophy other than his, or if there is, it must be subordinated to the precision of Greek discourse. They are so far from being able to judge rightly between two philosophers about philosophy itself. But those in the West who have genuinely devoted themselves to the doctrines of

philosophy do not judge in this way. They are almost greater in number, and I myself have encountered not a few of them.

3. Thus, Plethon says these things in his introduction, and in addition, he claims that he does not intend to slander Aristotle, though he slanders him in every way, but he wrongs Averroes in this manner. For he believes that by this method he will easily shake the judgment of Averroes in favor of Aristotle, though the Latins are not persuaded by Averroes more than by many others equally wise as him, who are also capable of judging and declaring such matters no less than Averroes and the ancients. That he slanders Averroes as well can be heard from all the Latins and Jews who daily engage with his writings on philosophy. For they say that he has assumed many things about the human intellect that are least in agreement with Aristotle and the truth of the faith, but they deny that he ever proposed it as corruptible. But Averroes is of little concern. I do not place Aristotle above Plato, nor Plato above Aristotle, unless someone compels me to do so. Rather, I consider both to be preeminent by nature and effort in the chorus of philosophers, and each of them extended through the excellence of their nature what they had received from their teachers. Yet in truth, both have erred in many ways, since the light of truth had not yet shone upon the souls of men. Aristotle, however, deviated less from the truth than Plato, which is why those around Plotinus, Proclus, and Porphyry sided more with Plato. For they knew that Aristotle's doctrines aligned more closely with the piety of Christ, which they chose to despise to their own detriment. Some were even led to utter certain absurdities against them. Just as they, in their Greek sophistry, preferred Plato to Aristotle, as if Aristotle were greatly discordant with the truth, so too those who apply the doctrines of both to the canon of the truth of the faith prefer Aristotle, since he strayed less from the truth and in most cases did not differ from those initiated into the sacred truth. This will become clear as the argument progresses. Thus, Aristotle would appear superior to Plato to all the holy men, and it would not be just to examine these two men in any other way than by comparing their doctrines to the sole canon of truth. Indeed, Aristotle alone, by his exhaustive treatment of all the genera of being in a certain order and arrangement almost beyond human nature, ensured that, if not for him, the human race would not have participated in natural philosophy. As for ethics, one can only benefit from Plato to a limited extent, and this is very little for those who wish to pursue the good through habit rather than reason. Without Aristotle's method of dialectic and all scientific reasoning, we would be so bereft that we might even prefer the worst to the best, as some now do because they consider Aristotle insignificant, being deprived of both dialectic and truth. Therefore, I do not intend to refute Plato where he falls short of both Aristotle and the truth, nor to compare both to the truth in general and reveal their deficiencies, but only to examine how much falsity is present in the blasphemies against the Philosopher. I leave the comparison of Aristotle and Plato to others, while I turn to the examination of what Plethon has demonstrated—or rather, what he has failed to demonstrate. I do not aim to counter-demonstrate but to say as much as is necessary to prove the truth regarding each of the insults hurled at Aristotle. If it were necessary for me to demonstrate, I would send you a lengthy book, carefully composed in the usual manner of my writing, which I hear Plethon also praises, granting me this favor. But even if I wished to do so, I could not, given the short time and many responsibilities. It was only with great difficulty that I managed to improvise even this much. If Plethon does not cease to disparage Aristotle and those who follow him, he will see us attacking him in another manner. For it will no longer be possible for us to refrain from reproaches, which are fitting for those who recklessly dare such things, especially after the proofs have been given in a

spirit of rivalry. Moreover, this battle will not be fought only for Aristotle and the truth but also for ourselves. There should be no necessity so strong as to make us neglect what we can do against him for that reason. We are not the kind of people to prefer Plethon, much less Aristotle, over ourselves. For we know that we know little, though not as little as he declares us to know, despite having no experience of us in any matter, nor perhaps being able to have such experience, nor knowing as much as he claims, for he has ignored even what is clear to those who know anything at all. If, just as he seeks to exalt himself by blaspheming Aristotle, he also slanders us, or accuses us of ignorance, or claims that we achieve nothing, or anything of the sort, he may perhaps enjoy some benefit from such audacity among those who do not know how to judge, but to the wise, he will pay the penalty for his words against me, just as he now does for his words against Aristotle. For me, it will suffice to be insulted by such a man alongside Aristotle, provided that he does not have to pay penalties to me or to any of those who have benefited from me and Aristotle.

4. Such is his character that he even threatens anyone who would dare to oppose him while he is still alive. For those who have received his book also report such a threat from him. If he thinks he would be wronged in this way, how is it that he does not wrong Aristotle first by attacking him after his death? Moreover, if he values not the judgments of the ignorant but those of the wise, which are worthy of all respect, then all the wise will side with one who speaks well, even if he is dead, just as they will condemn one who speaks the opposite, even if he is silent. If he has fought poorly against Aristotle, even if no one opposes him, he will be ridiculed now and in the future. And this will be even more the case if it turns out that he does not improve even when refuted by someone. But perhaps he thinks that everyone will avoid him because of his threat, and I too would have refrained, out of disdain, had I not already been bound by my promises. If he fears that later judgments will prevail because they come later, let him fear without cause. For neither he nor I should be the judge of our own words; others will decide which of us deserves praise. For this reason, I neither fear such things nor threaten. But if Plethon opposes me and argues against these points, I will eagerly respond, defending both Aristotle and myself without any restraint, as I have already said. If this task does not fall to me, or if no one else who follows Aristotle and me is willing to do it, then the judgment of all the wise will suffice for me. I know that they will render it well for me and Aristotle, but not for Plethon. If he claims to be wiser than all men, thinking himself equal to all the wise and even inventing some things on his own, we might easily grant him this. But if he opposes all the wise, we would never grant him this, unless we also say that the mad are wiser than all men because they claim to be so, even in their madness.

5. These remarks address Plethon's prologue and his threats. What follows will not be directed at Plethon alone but at anyone who dares to raise such doubts about Aristotle. Therefore, my discourse will not be overly burdensome, except when absolutely necessary, nor will it examine everything that Plethon has wrongly attributed to Plato and the truth or falsely assembled against Aristotle for the purpose of slander. Instead, I will focus on the most critical points, conducting brief examinations, yet striving to render a true judgment on each matter that seems to accuse Aristotle, as far as possible. For anyone who desires a more detailed understanding of these matters, my commentaries on Aristotle's works will sufficiently satisfy that desire. There, I address not only these issues but many others, defending Aristotle and right reason against anything that might seem suddenly discordant with the common opinions of the wise or inconsistent with himself. But now, I will discuss only those points that Plethon has raised.

6. We will not alter the order of the questions, nor will we change the structure of his arguments against each point. However, for the sake of clarity, we will follow them even if they are disordered. We will present his arguments in a way that makes them as clear as possible and gives them the appearance of necessity, removing what is superfluous and adding what is lacking. At the same time, we will amplify the difficulty by introducing additional arguments of our own in some cases, so that neither he nor anyone else may think that we are unable to oppose Aristotle on any point and are therefore persuaded where we should not be. I advise you, most noble leader, not to trust anyone who declares anything contrary to the common opinions of all the wise and who gathers a reputation for wisdom from the ignorant. Do not use Plethon or anyone similarly deceived as a judge of what I argue against him, but rather turn to Aristotle, Plato, and the wise men who now study them diligently. The West abounds with such men. And above all, trust yourself, who knows the works of Plato and Aristotle well and whose natural ability far surpasses that of Plethon, so that you can judge more correctly than he or any other person in all matters. Do not believe Plethon when he claims to be an ally of Plato while slandering Aristotle, for he does not even know Plato well. This is the role of Patroclus. As for the innovations he has introduced on greater matters, there is much discussion about this, as you know. He hoped that everyone would be persuaded by him, having gained some authority from daring to refute Aristotle himself, though Aristotle was the wisest of all men. Do not think that he was the first to conceive such ideas against Aristotle. Many have thought of these things before, and in earlier times, they treated these matters much better than he has in his writings, except that they did not use the term "energy" as he does, being excellent in grammatical analogy but not in the active principle itself.

7. Those who have attempted to slander Aristotle before him were deceived by the obscurity of his expression, which is most beneficial for philosophy and its students, not as a device to conceal some weakness, as Plethon falsely claims. Others, having listened to Aristotle justly and wisely, used the difficulty of his language to enhance his praise and to train themselves in the most perfect aspects of learning. I believe that even Plethon himself would greatly benefit if he were to hear one of Aristotle's defenders expounding the hidden wisdom of Aristotle in the best and truest manner. Otherwise, one might also accuse Plato in many instances of obscuring his doctrines with metaphors and figures of speech, if one wished to interpret him unfavorably, and not only in matters of knowledge but also in matters of virtue and nature, as it might seem to someone examining them in this way. But Plethon justly uses Plato, and we do so as well. However, the obscurity of Aristotle, a wise man, and the embellished style of Plato, a poet, are fitting to their respective pursuits, though I would not say that poetry is a lesser endeavor. Therefore, we do not disregard Plato or slander him for this reason, nor do we declare that he has philosophized poorly or said something ridiculous or childish because of what Plethon claims. For it was difficult even for Plato and for every man after Aristotle to grasp the truth of things, and it remains no less difficult today. For we seek and choose the truth not only with our intellect but also with a certain inclination of the will. This is why the intellect does not merely desire to understand what it has already grasped but also seeks to understand what it will grasp. In general, the true intelligible is not inherent in the essence of the human intellect, but it must be sought. And in seeking it, it is not impossible to err at times.

8. But concerning these matters, another discussion would be appropriate. For now, I advise you, most noble leader, that if Plethon remains silent in response to what has already been said, he should act as his own judge. For it is clear from his threats to respond that, if defeated by the truth, he will remain silent, or, if

he clings to the same opinion, he will be unable to argue further in its defense. If, however, he takes up the fight again and launches a second attack against Aristotle and these arguments of mine, thus disregarding what he has previously written, it will be as if, having been defeated, he now tries to fight back and wrestle a second time. But a victor should be content with the earlier contests and, as long as he can prevail through them, use his victory and not risk it on the uncertainty of fortune. Therefore, you should disregard his earlier writings for these reasons. As for what he intends to write, do not render any judgment until we have reached the truth with our arguments. For there is no way that those who dare to oppose Aristotle and the truth will ever appear stronger than those who defend them, no matter how often they attempt it.

9. Know also, most wise leader, that there is nothing difficult about troubling all the arguments in this book, even though they are true and in defense of Aristotle. For it is possible to oppose any argument and to say something persuasive against any argument or opinion. Therefore, if someone wished to engage in debate with me for the sake of exercise and to challenge this work of mine, I would gladly grant this immediately and would debate in such a way as to give all those devoted to Aristotle much trouble in trying to refute my points. But now we are not addressing external arguments but resolving Plethon's objections against Aristotle in light of the truth itself, granting him as much praise as he thought necessary to give to Aristotle, the most outstanding of all the wise. If Plethon says anything in response to these arguments, it will be impossible for him to speak the truth against the truth, and he will immediately face refutations. He will say many sophistical things, but he will achieve nothing significant unless he appears even worse than his reputation suggests, as if he is not even capable of sophistry, unlike those who practice it with skill. And if he uses such sophisms not for the sake of argument but because he truly believes them, how much disgrace would this justly bring upon him? If, however, Plethon remains silent and someone else dares to trouble these arguments, I will remain silent, despising him. Perhaps I will not even be able to respond then, being occupied with other matters. But he will appear to all reasonable judges to have completely broken with those devoted to Aristotle and to have fallen into the same error as Plethon, if he truly champions Plato or undertakes such labor merely for the sake of argument. He will show himself driven by some base human passion and will undertake something of little benefit to his own reputation. For no one will feel gratitude toward him as one who has labored for the truth, nor will he appear wiser for having argued merely for the sake of argument. For I know that no Greek, whether ancient or contemporary, has labored so much and in such a way for Aristotle and the truth itself, though their ability is far less than mine, since neither the objections of Plethon, the urgency of the moment, nor my current leisure demands or permits greater efforts. But for the sake of argument, I would oppose not only these men so easily, as if in play, but also every truth, if it were my purpose to engage in such play.

BOOK ONE AGAINST PLETHON

2. Book One.

1. First, Plethon claims that Aristotle did not believe the God who is King of all to be the Creator of the universe but only the mover of the heavens. For if he had believed this, Plethon says, he would have said so somewhere; otherwise, he would have philosophized poorly, busying himself with minor matters in nature while remaining silent about the greatest things. He would have passed over in silence the greatest work of God while exalting something far lesser. But if no one devoted to Aristotle would concede this, it is because Aristotle did not say it, since he did not believe it. And if he did not believe it, he is even more deficient, not only compared to all philosophers but also to all men of sound mind who hold better opinions about the divine.

2. Plethon does not prove that Aristotle calls God the mover of the heavens in a local sense, as if He were a producer or maker, which is what Plethon means by "Creator."

3. Furthermore, where Aristotle posits God as the final cause and the end of all things, he would have called Him the Creator if he had believed this. Yet even this is not said with much reverence, for it seems that Aristotle does not make God the end of the being or substance of things but only of their motion. Plethon correctly says that Aristotle makes God the end of motion, but he does not prove that God is the end only of motion and not of being and substance.

4. Moreover, what Aristotle says in Book XI of the Metaphysics makes this clear. For he says there: "It is absurd to attribute generation to eternal things; indeed, it is impossible." From this, it is clear that Aristotle, like perhaps some others, believes that temporal generation necessarily follows from causal generation. Thus, everything that exists from a cause must have begun to exist at some time, and what has no temporal beginning has no productive cause of itself. Therefore, if according to Aristotle the universe is eternal, and he says that generation of eternal things is impossible, it follows, according to Aristotle himself, that there is no generation of the universe. Consequently, there is no Creator of it—that is, no cause or producer.

5. Plethon does not prove that if there is no generation of the heavens, there is no productive cause of them. Aristotle would say that Plethon is especially deceived in this. But it must be observed that in this argument, Plethon subtly criticizes us Christians, who have received this belief from Moses, and he presents Aristotle as in harmony with the Christian faith, as we have argued in the prologue. Thus, if he says that Aristotle, along with some others, held a wrong opinion on this matter, he also directs the same criticism at us. For we are the ones who seem to believe that temporal generation follows from causal generation, and according to Moses, we posit a temporal generation of the universe. The opposite is held by Plato and his followers. Yet we disagree with Aristotle on this point, assuming this opinion is indeed Aristotle's. For if Aristotle were shown to believe that there is no generation or production of beings from a cause, he would seem to presuppose a temporal beginning for causal generation. Thus, since a temporal beginning appears impossible to him, he denies causal generation. But we, not because we presuppose a temporal beginning for causal generation, believe that the universe began at some time, but because the divine Scriptures teach us so, and no impossibility follows. For it is not necessary that if the cause is eternal, its effect must also be eternal, as will become clear in what follows. On the contrary, this will be evident from Aristotle's own words, which will be presented shortly.

6. It is necessary to understand that before Plato, none of the philosophers were able to say anything clear about the first, immaterial, and immovable principle of beings, nor about separate or separable substances. For all of them were occupied with the material principle and the generation of beings from it, extending their speculation only this far. And before this, it seemed a great and even arrogant thing, as Plato himself says, to inquire into nature, so far were they from being able to conceive anything about higher and divine matters. Only Anaxagoras and Pythagoras, having associated with the wise men of Egypt, who had received many teachings of truth from the Jews, were able to say something beyond the others about the invisible principle of beings. Plato, the most diligent of all who came before him, and having received from Anaxagoras and Pythagoras some faint glimpses of higher truth, sailed to Egypt, as Hieronymus, Plutarch, and Xenophon before him report, and as he himself claims. There, he received many seeds of sacred truth. For it seemed to him that men could not know only what they learned from one another or what they devised themselves, using the natural light of their own intellect, but that something divine could also be sent down into the human mind. Therefore, he not only accepted such things from the Egyptians but also believed much of what the Greek poets said and advised others to do the same, as they presented certain sacred and divine teachings, such as Musaeus and Linus, who lived during the Trojan era, and later Hesiod and Homer, and Orpheus, who preceded them by one generation, though he says they spoke without plausible or necessary arguments. Even if he sometimes disdains these poets, he mixed many of their follies with the truth he received from the Egyptians, which he ought to have preserved pure and unadulterated. Moses, who lived more than a thousand years before the earliest of these poets, knew the great difference between his theology and their nonsense, and he also had the testimony of the Egyptians about Moses, who were devoted to sacred matters and laws, as Aristotle says, and established for all Greeks certain archetypes of such things, as the Greeks themselves acknowledge. If it was necessary for the Greeks to follow their poets in some respects, they should have followed them in those things where they agree most with Moses and the wise men of Egypt, who far surpass them in the subtlety and precision of their doctrines, not in those where they diverge and invent incredible tales on their own.

7. Whether Plato, fearing suspicion for bringing foreign wisdom to the Greeks, or wishing to introduce a kind of Hellenized version of it, or simply judging poorly, did not fully accept Moses but mixed much poetic nonsense with the purity of his theology, is not easy to determine. However, it is clear that what distinguishes Plato from others in his views on being, God, and the production of beings comes from the sacred teaching of Moses. Similarly, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, which Plato was the first to define better than other philosophers before and after him, comes from Moses. The same is true of the eternal Trinity, which is the Good, the Intellect, and the Soul of the universe, as Plotinus and Numenius attribute such ideas to Plato. Yet, concerning the immortality of the soul, Plato introduces many reputable arguments, some even demonstrative. On other matters, he relies on his own authority, having been persuaded by the authority of those who spoke before him and by what seemed reasonable.

8. According to the sacred teaching through Moses, the world is both created and indestructible. It is created because it came into being from a higher cause, as indicated by the phrase, "God created," and it is temporal because it began at the start of time. Those who expound the writings of Moses say that three things came into being together: the heavens, the corporeal matter signified by the name "earth," and time. Some add the angelic nature to these, while others say it was produced before these three, since Moses does

not clearly define the creation of the angels. Those who say the angels were created at the same time seem to speak better, for if they were created earlier, this would follow again. For it is impossible, according to Moses' view, for them to have been created except in time, so that at least from that first moment when time began, the angels also began. Time is the measure of the motion of the heavens. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth," this and the whole universe, as has been said. Thus, according to Moses, the world is created. It is indestructible because it is impossible for God's creations to pass into non-being. Concerning this, Moses says that God declared, "Behold, it is very good." For their surpassing goodness would be diminished if they were destroyed, since it is most evident in their perpetual existence. Even if some of these things change in their essential form, as happens to all things subject to generation and corruption, they remain in their matter. But the indestructible creations remain in both their essential form and their matter. They change in place, like the heavenly bodies. The incorporeal beings change in their dispositions and desires, and thus they are not equal to the wholly immutable cause of their being, for they must be inferior to it. But in not passing into absolute non-being, they resemble it in some way, since the necessary order of the universe makes this resemblance different in them, following their nature according to their greater or lesser proximity to their first cause. All these things are also taught by the theology of the supreme God, who spoke to us through our nature, since it was impossible for Him to contradict Himself, having foretold the truth through Moses in a figure. Developing the knowledge of the truth in our souls, it teaches us to think that even the naturally indestructible creations, whether because they are only forms or because they have matter suited to indestructible forms, will undergo some change for the better, which the sacred word calls a cessation or destruction not so much of them as of the dominant state within them.

9. Thus, following the sacred teaching of Moses, and also some of the inspired poets among the Greeks, as they themselves claim, Plato posits that the world is created and assigns to it the same matter, not one kind for the heavens and another for things subject to generation and corruption. He says that this matter preceded the heavens not merely in thought but in time and reality, existing at times without form, order, or virtue, but later acquiring these, though not entirely purely, but with some admixture of disorder and irregularity. He also does not consider the world indestructible by nature but by the dominance of the eternal soul that moves it, and because, being the work of God, it is good and cannot be destroyed by the best, though by nature it is dissoluble and perishable. He says that matter itself is akin to God and not posterior in time but only in cause. He speaks in this way about the world, sometimes agreeing with Moses and sometimes diverging completely, but generally aligning with him in saying that the world is created and indestructible, even if he does not explicitly attribute this view to Moses, as he does not with others. These views surpass the heights of philosophy and reveal either true revelations or false inspirations, or they descend to the opinions of the multitude. Plato does not attribute these opinions to their original discoverers but makes them all his own, thus establishing a kind of foreign and flowery philosophy, composed of reason, revelations, inspirations, and irrational opinions, selecting from all what seemed best.

10. Aristotle, having been a student of Plato, did not approach the study of philosophy from the same perspective as his teacher. Although he acknowledged his debt to Plato, who had been a collaborator in the pursuit of truth, both by providing starting points for truth through his correct and true philosophizing and by offering opportunities for exercise through his errors, as Aristotle himself says in the lesser Alpha of the Metaphysics, where he uses the examples of Timotheus and before him a certain Phrynis, he nevertheless

accepted the teachings of Plato and others not without proper scrutiny. He placed truth above all, valuing it more than favor or reverence toward his teachers. Therefore, he presents the truth about each matter while refuting opposing views, as befits a teacher who aims at truth. Plato, having taken some of his ideas about forms and numbers from Pythagoras and having invented and transformed others on his own, often without much necessity, and having striven to connect mathematical necessity with physical necessity, and having taken some things from poets and others from the sacred book of Moses, often speaks without proof and confuses all the sciences. Aristotle, on the other hand, clearly distinguished the sciences and assigned to each genus of being its proper subject, giving to each problem its own proper arguments: physical arguments to physical matters, mathematical arguments to mathematical matters, and so on. He does not rely on his own authority or that of others but considers only what is agreed upon by all and what is reasonable, saying that what is reasonable is demonstrated by clear and indisputable arguments, and what is agreed upon by the mind is self-evident and known to the human mind, like the first principles of demonstration, about which no one can be deceived. He chose this method not only for natural and ethical philosophy but also for divine and first philosophy. There too, he did not use geometric proofs or irrational authority but relied on what appears reasonable for the contemplation of being in general, the first principles, and the first cause itself, since the power of reason, when rightly and methodically extended, can reach even these. He did not, like the poets, conceal the truth about divine matters under the veil of myths, nor, like Plato later, obscure the brilliance of philosophy under mathematical forms, so that only he could know the truth, while his listeners either paid attention to the sound of his words or were divided into different opinions about the hidden meaning. This is what happens to those who deify Plato, each guessing something different about his hidden thought, with nothing clear or agreed upon. That Aristotle rejected this path is shown by himself in Book Beta of the Metaphysics, where he criticizes those like Hesiod who say that the gods who did not taste nectar and ambrosia became mortal, while those who tasted them attained immortality. For if one understands these words only by their sound, they have no efficacy; but if by the truth hidden beneath them, they would reveal nothing clear, being known only to those who know. This, I think, is Aristotle's defense against the dialectic of Plato and the other philosophers before him, that he was led to conduct his discussions not toward some inner truth, as they would say, but toward what is outwardly and clearly proposed, wishing to deliver philosophy pure and free from all obscurity and ambiguity to mankind. I do not say this about everything in which Plato and others are refuted by Aristotle, for most of their errors are not superficially false but contain much irrationality within, and however one examines them, they are clearly contrary to reason. Aristotle neither slanders the ancestral opinions of the Greeks nor legislates beyond them, nor does he define the necessity of truth solely by what appears reasonable. For in Book Lambda of the Metaphysics, comparing the opinions of the ancients and the many about separate forms and showing their agreement, he adds: "Thus, the ancestral opinion and that of the first philosophers are clear to us only to this extent." Before this, speaking about the immovable principles, he says: "It is reasonable to assume that there are so many; let the necessary be left to those who speak more strongly." Thus, he knows a greater necessity of truth than what appears reasonable, which is given to the inspired by the divine. But he, being not such a one, nor wishing to mix the unmixed, and knowing that the work of a philosopher is demonstration through arguments, examines the nature of being in a manner befitting a philosopher, not through poetic myths and divinations, but leaves these to poets and hierophants, having rightly distinguished philosophy from poetry and divine

inspiration, just as he distinguished natural and mathematical philosophy. And I think that even Plethon would see the value of this path of philosophy, who is said to criticize inspirations and revelations as errors and to prove in another of his writings that truth is found only through human reason by means of philosophy—unless, out of favor for Plato, he wishes to assert things inconsistent with himself, abusing his authority. We do not blame Aristotle for acknowledging some sacred truth and for bearing witness to a greater necessity than that of reason, since we ourselves hold such an opinion. But we rightly praise and are grateful for his practice of departing from this with reverence, everywhere considering only what agrees with reason, or to the extent that one is led by reason, and setting himself up as a teacher to those who cannot discover it on their own. As for Plato, although we praise him for sometimes yielding to sacred truth, we cannot praise him for not yielding properly or for not recognizing where this sacred and divine element lies, nor for mixing this kind of discourse with everything from philosophy, making all things common. In the method of dialectic and the teaching of the other philosophical theorems, both in instruction and in practical demonstration, Plato falls so far short of Aristotle as Aristotle surpasses all in the careful use of reason, for whom this has been a primary concern.

11. But concerning divine inspiration—what it truly is, among whom it exists, and how without it the human mind could not have grasped the truth about divine matters in any way, but would have continually thirsted for it in vain, which would have been impossible—we do not argue against Plethon or anyone else who holds contrary opinions on such matters. Later, if God wills, we will treat these subjects separately. For now, we will adhere to our original purpose, which is to show that Aristotle has been slandered by Plethon and his followers.

12. This, then, is the path of Aristotelian philosophy, and though it is the best, it has been and still is burdensome to many. In defending himself against such people at the end of the second book of the Metaphysics, Aristotle shows how not everyone is equally pleased with the same method of teaching truth. For some, he says, because they have been trained in mathematics and, due to weak judgment but active imagination, want everything to be presented to them in mathematical terms. Others, due to an inability to understand, seek some sensible example for every demonstration. Still others demand the testimony of some ancient authority. And there are those who are averse to the precise investigation of all things, being unable to follow it and considering it mere nitpicking, like those who are angered by creditors who demand even the smallest debts, calling such people illiberal, untimely, and stingy. In the same way, Plethon and his followers call Aristotle's precision and accuracy meddlesomeness and nitpicking. To those who have suffered and still suffer from this, Aristotle does not harshly reproach them but only blames habit, which produces such differences among men. Nor is it right for us now to reproach them. It is enough to say that Aristotle, by accurately distinguishing the sciences and defining each problem within them with the necessity of logical argument, has truly accomplished the work of a philosopher—something neither Plato nor any other man has been able to do. Yet he did not refrain from gratifying the desires of each in some way, though not entirely. For it was impossible, since each person welcomes a different method due to habit and wishes everything to be presented in a way familiar and dear to him. Aristotle sometimes uses the authority of earlier philosophers and common opinions, and he clarifies his arguments with examples. Yet he does this incidentally and for the clearer manifestation of truth. Everywhere he makes the reasonable and the necessary his primary concern, which is his method, pursued by no one else, as has been said, with such diligence and in

so many matters. To the less diligent, he presents general arguments in summary treatises; to the more diligent, he descends even to the particulars within each genus, breaking down the inquiry, if anyone among men is to be truly benefited.

13. Thus, following this most precise and wise path of philosophical inquiry, Aristotle believed that the heavens, time, and motion are eternal, and he demonstrated this with many arguments. He criticizes Plato for declaring the world to be generated, while he himself considers it ungenerated. For if Plato believes the world is eternal, Aristotle says, it is wrong to say it was generated, since to say that something is generated yet eternal is impossible. Only those things that we observe to exist in many or all cases can reasonably be posited as such. To assert this absolutely is either to know nothing or to claim some divine and heavenly teaching. But if Plato posits the world as generated, it must also be perishable, for it is impossible for something generated to remain imperishable or for something ungenerated and always existing to perish. Yet Plato says the world is both imperishable and generated, and again, by nature perishable but never actually perishing. All these claims are neither reasonable nor consistent with logic. As for Aristotle's proofs of the eternity of motion in his works On Motion and On the Heavens, it is unnecessary to recount them here. That he considers the world ungenerated in time, though generated in cause, is most clearly shown in those arguments, and no one would doubt it. For he says, strictly speaking, what is ungenerated cannot come to be in such a way that it previously did not exist and later does. He concludes: "Therefore, whatever always exists is simply imperishable, and likewise ungenerated. For if it were generated, there would be a time when it did not exist." And again: "Thus, the whole heaven neither came to be nor can perish, as some say, but is one and eternal, having no beginning or end in all eternity, containing within itself infinite time," and so on.

14. Similarly, Aristotle says that matter is ungenerated, not because it has no productive cause, as if it were self-generated—a property belonging only to the first cause of all—but because it does not come to be in the way generated things do, that is, things subject to generation and corruption. For these come to be from a substrate and change from one form to another, arriving at being through a succession of time, moving toward the form that is the end of generation, and becoming complete from what was incomplete. But matter is not like this; it has attained its being all at once. That Aristotle speaks of matter as ungenerated in this way is clear in the first book of On Principles. For after saying that matter must be imperishable and ungenerated, he adds: "If it were generated, something must first underlie it, from which it would come to be by being present in it. But this is nature itself, namely matter, so it would exist before it came to be." Therefore, he says matter is ungenerated because it does not come to be from another material principle, as natural things do. In general, Aristotle defines generation in natural philosophy as a kind of change in which one thing is presupposed and another comes to be. In this kind of generation, the earlier and later are observed, as well as opposition. Since all things that come to be by nature do so in this way and no other mode of generation is evident, whatever cannot come to be in this way due to the consequences is rightly and reasonably called ungenerated. Yet nothing prevents something from being brought into existence by a universal cause, not successively but all at once. For since the causal and active power of the first cause extends to many things, it is necessary that what primarily subsists in all things is entirely brought forth by the first cause. Moreover, the first cause of all is compared to nature as nature is compared to art. Just as the artisan presupposes the matter of the artifact, which is the composite formed by nature, and in this presupposes the matter partially, producing the form, so the universal cause brings forth the whole being of

the thing, which is its matter and form. Therefore, Aristotle does not conclude that imperishable things have no beginning at all, but that they do not begin through generation, that is, natural motion, by which things subject to generation and corruption begin to exist, as Plato seemed to say. For Plato nowhere clearly defines the eternity of time and motion, nor does he, in saying the world or the soul is generated, mean only in cause and not in time. But by using the term "generated," he gave the impression that he believed it came to be in time. Yet since he did not clearly distinguish "generated" in this way, nor sufficiently teach and demonstrate the eternity of the universe, the suspicion remains. That Plato said nothing clear about eternity is also stated by Aristotle in the Topics, where he includes among the problems about which no clear arguments had been found by his predecessors, though they were important, the question of whether the world is eternal. This is evident to those who study Plato. But the Platonists after Aristotle, having accepted the eternity of the universe and praising Aristotle for having nobly demonstrated it, grant to Plato that he too believed the universe to be eternal and understood "generated" not in time but in cause. And they say that Aristotle is slandered by his followers in this regard—though he would only be slandered if he had clearly defined these matters. If he intended to mean something else under expressions that signify something else, one would need the skill of a diviner to guess it, and those who judge him by what is evident would be far more credible than those who attribute to him some opinion based on conjecture and divination, least of all evident from his own words. But concerning Aristotle's views on eternity, no diviner is needed.

15. It has also been said that in the Metaphysics, Aristotle defended both Plato and the so-called theological poets, arguing that while their style lacks persuasive force or vigor, the meaning concealed beneath their words can only be fully understood by them, and no one else could comprehend it. In this regard, Aristotle appears wiser than those who follow Plato, and for this reason, they attempt to align Plato with him. And if we must speak the truth, there is no doctrine more fitting for a wise person than this one, nor could it be demonstrated better by anyone than it has been by Aristotle. However, if the sacred faith teaches us something else—a truth that transcends the evident order of nature—this does not contradict Aristotle's philosophy. For no one is unaware that the sacred faith teaches many things that surpass the natural order, among which is this: "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness" (1 Corinthians 3:19). That is, Christ is said to have demonstrated that the wisdom of the world is a servant and a student of true wisdom. Just as we, while engaging in discussions about the eternity of Aristotle's principles and praising him for his philosophical insights in these matters, nevertheless believe that the world had a temporal beginning, so too do we believe many other things that surpass natural reasoning, trusting those who speak these truths from God, who have provided us with many irrefutable proofs of their authenticity. We do nothing wrong by placing our confidence in the accuracy of such matters more in the inspiration from God than in human teaching or the logical consistency of our own reasoning. For concerning divine and lofty matters, among which this question is also included, there is nothing that can be known with certainty, but only conjectured. And just as those who examine what follows from reason, even if it falls short of precision, are better than those who know nothing at all, so too are those who, through higher knowledge—that is, sacred teaching—attain an understanding of the greatest things, elevated above the former. That our intellect does not possess sufficient capacity for divine and lofty matters but requires some inspiration to enlighten and elevate it to that height, even Aristotle himself acknowledges. For he says, "Just as the eyes of bats are to the light of day, so is the intellect of our soul to the things that are by nature most evident of all" (Metaphysics, Book 2, Chapter

1). This he says excellently in the lesser alpha of the Metaphysics. Plato, too, is greatly pleased by such ideas in many places throughout his dialogues. Therefore, just as if the bat had reason and truth, it would know that it is possible for another creature to see the sun during the day, being better equipped for it and having a greater capacity for vision, so too should we, as rational beings, firmly believe that the highest and divine truth can be revealed to certain beings better than to us humans—that is, to those separate substances that possess pure intellect and are least obscured by sensory things. And it is not impossible for us ourselves to uncover some truth about all things, a truth more divine than what has hitherto been understood, which improves the eyes of our soul and, as it were, repairs them, since even according to the theology of Moses and Plato himself, it is true that this life of man is base and subject to passions, and we pay the penalty here for a base and ignoble desire. For now, let the differences between Moses and Plato on these matters be set aside, and let only what is in agreement be considered.

16. It is impossible for God to have less power than human physicians or to be less philanthropic than they are, so that while humans can restore health to the sick and bring them back to their former condition through appropriate treatments, God would neglect the human soul or desire to heal it but be unable to do so by any method, enabling it to draw nearer to the truth from which it has fallen and for which it naturally longed before and still longs for now, even in its fallen state. But even if someone is not persuaded by Moses or Plato, neither in the points on which they agree concerning human life nor in those on which they differ, it is not difficult for such a person to expect some improvement of the intellect and not consider it impossible. For just as we acquire knowledge of existing things through practice and diligence, so too can we believe that we are capable of enjoying some divine illumination and revelation, whether for an individual or for many together. It is clear that the divine acts upon the human intellect and inspires something good and true, beneficial both to the individual and to others. It makes no difference whether this benefit pertains to this life or to the life of man after death, though it is much more significant for the latter. For this opinion, as has been said, is also supported by Aristotle, who states: "It is reasonable to assume that the immovable substances are so many" (Metaphysics, Book 12, Chapter 8). But let the necessity of speaking about stronger arguments be set aside, since the sacred and revealed truth considers a greater necessity than what is derived from apparent reason. Hence, God first revealed many things to us through Moses and later through Himself, in the man with whom He united Himself, making what was previously revealed clearer and adding much more. Among these revelations is the creation of the entire universe, which we believe did not occur in time, so that the Creator would need to be moved or changed in some way, but rather that time itself was created simultaneously with the universe, in which this creation took place. Nor did matter exist beforehand in itself, devoid of all form, so as to risk contradiction, since something cannot exist in actuality without activity. Rather, matter received a universal form at the very moment of its creation, though it was later differentiated according to the beauty and order now visible. For later, when the heavens were adorned with light and the earth was freed from the covering of waters and beautified with plants and all kinds of vegetation, matter was not given to the heavens and other bodies in the same way, except by analogy. Otherwise, the matter of the heavens would have to be capable of receiving multiple forms, not only imperishable ones but also their opposites, and if these were to approach it or not, it would not be free from the disposition proper to perishable things. Moreover, the universe was not created through the mediation of the angelic substances, whom we call angels, nor were the bodily forms brought into existence at that time or even now through

some participation or impression from those substances. Rather, all things were created directly by God, and even now they receive their forms from the power of the First Cause through particular and composite agents. For sacred theology presents the creation of the universe to us as free from and untainted by these Platonic ideas. At the same time, it teaches us to disregard Aristotle's doctrine of eternity, even though the arguments in its favor carry much plausibility and even though human reason contributes nothing necessary to support faith, except to attempt to dissolve the apparent necessity of the Aristotelian arguments. Yet, Aristotle's view on eternity is not entirely opposed to the hypothesis of faith, for while it posits that motion always exists, it diverges from faith, since according to faith, nothing can always exist except God alone, who is entirely immovable—unless one wishes to say that God's act of thinking is motion, but this would be homonymous, not synonymous. Aristotle, however, is not speaking of such motion but of motion in the proper sense. On the other hand, his assertion that the motion of the heavens is no more eternal than motion in general aligns with faith, for faith posits that the substance of the world began to exist in such a way that it will never cease to exist. It also posits that certain motions will be eternal, especially those of humans, who will continue to live an imperishable life, whether in misery or in blessedness. In general, Aristotle's doctrine of eternity differs from faith only in its addition of "always existing," and even those who later deified Plato agree on this point. Without this addition, the rest of the doctrine is sound. For they define eternity as the unchangeable state of existing perpetually without interruption, without succession in time. Without the "always existing," eternity could be well defined in this way, and some things could be conceded, even according to our faith, to be eternal in this manner.

17. The question of eternity, whether considered according to Aristotle and Plato or according to the sacred truth, must be defined as follows. Some claim that Aristotle and those who adhere to the sacred truth maintain that temporal succession necessarily follows from causal generation, so that whatever comes from a cause must necessarily come into being in time, while whatever does not come into being in time must not have a cause of its existence. However, this claim is a groundless and false accusation against both Aristotle and us who adhere to the sacred truth. Nowhere does Aristotle establish such a necessary sequence, nor do we, who have been enlightened by the supreme law of Christ, base the doctrine concerning the temporal beginning of created beings on such an argument. Rather, we affirm, both according to sacred theology and in agreement with Aristotle, that all things have been brought into existence by the first creative cause, as we shall soon demonstrate. Yet, that these things came into being at some point and are not co-eternal with the first cause is something we believe solely on the basis of sacred truth. We understand, however, that in believing this, we do not believe in something impossible, even if it stands in apparent contradiction to Aristotle's doctrine of eternity. For even if everything in the heavens follows from becoming and having become, this does not apply to the movement of the heavens nor to the first principle that brings them into being. That is why Aristotle excludes from his philosophy the notions of generation, having become, and being created. However, we do not apply the term "generation" or "becoming" in the strictest sense to the universal procession of beings, nor do we consider this procession to be a movement or any sort of change. Rather, we understand it as a simple outpouring from the supreme goodness. Nevertheless, we employ terms like "generation," "creation," and "making" analogically, using clearer expressions to describe the bringing forth of all beings from the first cause as from a source, without any pre-existing subject, movement, or change. This event did not occur in time but in the beginning—that is, simultaneously with the beginning of

time itself. It was not due to any natural necessity in the first cause, as though the first cause were subject to necessity by virtue of its eternal existence. Rather, it resulted from a necessity inherent in the divine will, which, though eternal, was not ordered toward an eternal effect. Therefore, we cannot offer demonstrative proofs for this doctrine, since no created intellect can give an account of the will of God. We can, however, demonstrate that the contrary position is not necessary. That Aristotle does not hold that whatever does not come into being in time is also without a cause is evident from what he states in the eighth book of the Physics. In his introductory remarks, as is customary, he wishes to show the usefulness of his discussion on eternal motion and says that it is necessary to examine this subject not only in relation to the study of nature but also in relation to the method of inquiry concerning the first principle. In both this book and the higher books of the Physics, he employs the eternity of motion as proof of the existence of a first principle, considering it the most incontestable method of demonstration. For if the whole cosmos and its movement are eternal, then a first principle must necessarily be posited. But if eternity is denied to them, then it is all the more necessary to posit a first principle, for whatever comes into being anew necessarily requires a principle that introduces novelty. Consequently, the only way to avoid the necessity of positing a first principle would be to claim that beings are eternal. But since this claim has been refuted, it necessarily follows that a first principle must exist.

18. The matters concerning the first principle, which is unmoved yet causes motion, and which Plato calls "self-moved" (as one might say "self-acting" or, more precisely, "the most self-acting"), have been demonstrated by Aristotle in the most excellent and complete manner, both in his discourses on motion and in many places in the Metaphysics. It is difficult to expound these matters fully, yet no one is so ignorant or misguided as to doubt that Aristotle acknowledges one God as the first principle and holds that there is one primary cause of all things. However, Plethon believes that the divine is posited only as the cause of the motion of the heavens and of all things—that is, of their movement alone—but not as the cause of their being and substance. This is clearly false, for in the second book of the Metaphysics, Aristotle explicitly states: "We do not know the truth without a cause, and each thing is most truly itself in relation to that by which it is synonymous with others. For example, fire is the hottest, and it is also the cause of heat in other things. Thus, what is the cause of truth in subsequent things is itself the most true. Therefore, the principles of eternal things must always be the most true, for they are never false, nor is there any cause of their being, but they are the cause of being for other things. Hence, each thing, insofar as it has being, also has truth in the same measure." To demonstrate that first philosophy contemplates the highest truth, Aristotle introduces the following axiom: that which is most truly said to be "this something" is that from which something else comes to be, spoken synonymously of it, just as fire is the cause of heat in things composed of elements and is itself the hottest. This is evidenced by the shared name. In the same way, that which is the cause of truth in subsequent things is itself the most true, imparting both the name and the reality of truth. From this, it follows that the principles of eternal things—that is, the celestial bodies—are the most true. For since they are not sometimes true and sometimes false, they rightly surpass the truth of other things, which are sometimes true and sometimes false, namely, things that come into being and pass away. Since there is no cause of their being, but they themselves are rather the cause of being for other things, they surpass both in truth and in substantiality. Even though the celestial bodies are imperishable, they nevertheless exist by a cause, not only in terms of their motion but also in terms of their being. For all composite and participating

things must be traced back to certain causes that exist in themselves and in substance. All corporeal things exist in actuality insofar as they participate in some form. Hence, it is necessary that the separate substance, which is a form in itself, be the principle of corporeal substance. But philosophy contemplates the first causes, as has been demonstrated in the first book. Therefore, it follows that philosophy is the contemplative science of the most true things. Hence, this science is most properly the knowledge of truth, for it is from the causes that each thing derives its being and, consequently, its truth, since the causes of being for other things are themselves the most true. Thus, the Philosopher (Aristotle) understood the divine to be not only the cause of motion for the heavens but also the cause of their substance and being.

19. Furthermore, in the third book of On Motion, Aristotle says almost the same things. For he says concerning Democritus: "He does not think it necessary to seek a principle for what is eternal, and in some cases he is correct to say this, but in all cases, he is not correct. For example, a triangle always has its angles equal to two right angles, yet there is another cause for this eternality." However, the principles themselves have no other cause, since they are eternal. Just as in the second book of the Metaphysics, Aristotle similarly states that things relate to both being and truth, and for this reason, eternal things have a cause of their being, which is also the cause of their being true, so here he says that there are certain eternal things, namely the celestial bodies, which nevertheless have a cause of their being. Hence, it is evident here as well that while Aristotle posits the cosmos as eternal, he also holds that the divine is not only the cause of this eternal motion but also the cause of its being.

20. Moreover, in the fifth book of the Metaphysics and the eighth book of the Physics, Aristotle states that some things are necessary and have a cause for their necessity, while others have no cause for their necessity. The former are the eternal and unmoved things, while the latter are the eternal and moved things. Thus, the eternal and unmoved cause is the source of eternal motion in the moved things, and therefore also of their eternal being. For they exist eternally because they are eternally moved by the eternal movers. This is their being: to be eternally moved by the eternal movers. By this same cause, things that change in various ways also have their causes in motion.

21. Furthermore, in the fifth book of the Metaphysics, Aristotle says: "All causes must be eternal, especially those that are separate and unmoved, which are the concern of first philosophy. For these are the causes of the manifest divine things." If, therefore, the first causes are unmoved and immaterial, and are causes of the manifest divine things—that is, the visible and perceptible things—and consequently causes of all other beings, as he also demonstrates in the second book, it is clear that this science investigates the common causes of all beings as beings. And these causes, whether many or one (the first cause), are causes not only of motion but also of their substance.

22. Moreover, in the first book of On the Heavens, Aristotle says: "All people, both barbarians and Greeks, who believe in the existence of gods, assign the highest place to the divine. It is clear that the immortal is connected to the immortal, for it is impossible otherwise." What else could this connection mean, if not that the immortal heavens are closely and eternally dependent on the divine for their being and life? For he does not mean a connection in place or time, since the naturally immortal divine is above the heavens and outside them. Outside the heavens, there is neither place, nor time, nor void, according to him. These things are made even clearer as he progresses in the same book, stating explicitly: "It is evident, therefore, that there is neither place, nor void, nor time outside the heavens. Hence, the things there are not naturally in a

place, nor does time cause them to age, nor is there any change in anything beyond the outermost sphere. Rather, they remain unchangeable and impassible, possessing the best and most self-sufficient life for all eternity. For even the name 'eternity' has been divinely uttered by the ancients: the end that encompasses the time of each thing's life, beyond which there is nothing by nature, is called the 'eternity' of each thing. By the same reasoning, the end of the whole heaven, which encompasses all time and infinity, is eternity, taking its name from 'always being.' It is immortal and divine. Hence, it is also the source of being and life for other things, some more precisely, others more obscurely." Thus, even here, the connection signifies that the immortal heavens have their being closely and eternally from the naturally immortal substance. Furthermore, the end of the heavens, which he calls 'eternity,' as something always existing, immortal, and divine, is said to be the cause of being and life for other things—more precisely for the heavens, which are closely connected and immortal by similarity to the divine, and more obscurely for things that are further removed and situated beneath the heavens.

23. Nothing could be clearer for demonstrating that Aristotle not only does not incline toward atheism but also holds the better and more elevated views among men. For if the end of this heaven and of all that exists is the divine, as the Philosopher (Aristotle) clearly shows in the Metaphysics, and if the being and life of other things depend on this divine—some being directly connected, namely the more divine of bodies, while others have their reference to it through those directly connected—how does he not simultaneously declare God to be both the end and the efficient cause, the producer of being and life for all things that in any way partake of substance and life? And he speaks much better than those who derive the entire heaven from the ideal world and the forms, and his view is more in harmony with the truth as we understand it.

24. In addition to this, if Aristotle declares God to be the first principle of all things, it is clear that he also considers God to be the efficient cause of the heavens and the cause of their being. For Aristotle says that a principle is not only the source of becoming but also of being and knowledge. He states that it is common to all principles to be the first from which something either exists, comes to be, or is known. If, therefore, he regards some first principle of being, and if this principle is not the source of knowledge (for by nature it is most evident, as he himself says, though the things beneath it are clearer to us, and we know it through them), nor the source of becoming (since the heavens are ungenerated according to him), then it must be, according to Aristotle, the principle of being. If, in applying this common characteristic of all principles to the forms, he perhaps omits some aspect of the principle that would belong to the first principle, this is not surprising. For he sets forth certain kinds of principles that encompass many things and extend to infinite cases, each participating in its own form. But the mode of causality most fitting to God is set apart and belongs to God alone, not to anything else. Yet it suffices to say that he regards every principle as that from which something first either exists, comes to be, or is known. And he asserts that there is some first principle of all things.

25. Moreover, the same reasoning applies to the concept of cause. For he says that causes are spoken of in the same ways as principles, though they differ in definition. The term "principle" particularly denotes a certain order in relation to what is under it, while the term "cause" denotes an influence from it toward the being of the caused thing. Thus, if there is a principle of being for the heavens, the same would also be the cause of their being, even if not in terms of being known or coming to be, at least in terms of being. Generally, according to Aristotle, the moving cause is also the efficient cause, and to move is similarly to

produce. For in the twelfth book of the Metaphysics, he says: "Neither number, nor matter, nor form and definition is the cause of production." He means that number is not the cause of things, neither as the source of motion nor as the other kinds of causes. And in the same book, he says: "If there is something that moves or produces but does not act, there is no motion." And again: "Nor will anything of the opposites be what produces or moves; for number will not produce continuity, neither as moving nor as form." In many places, he seems to regard the efficient cause, the moving cause, the source of motion, and similar terms as synonymous. If, therefore, they willingly concede that the Philosopher believes in some moving nature of the whole, they must also concede, even if unwillingly, that he regards this nature as productive, based on his own statements. And again, in the same book, he says: "Further, no one explains in what way numbers are one, or the soul and body, or in general the form and the thing, nor is it possible to explain unless one says, as we do, that the mover produces."

26. From this, it is demonstrated not only that he regards the moving cause as productive but also that he criticizes those who assign no cause for the unity in beings and says that even if they wished to do so, they could not, unless they said what he himself says. He says simply that the mover is the cause of unity in beings and that this unity is imparted to beings by it. If, therefore, something moves the whole universe, which is in some way one and ensouled according to Aristotle and Plato, and if the mover is the cause of unity, just as it is of numbers and of the soul in relation to the body, and of every form and thing, then it is clear that he declares God to be the cause of the unity of the whole, not only of its motion but also of the unity it has by being ensouled. And in general, just as those around Plato said that the forms and numbers are the causes of beings—not of their motion but rather of their immutability, as far as possible, and of their being—though they erred in attributing to forms and numbers what is impossible (for how, he says, could the forms produce unity in things, if the mover produces this unity and the forms have no account of a moving cause?), so Aristotle most clearly demonstrates in the Metaphysics that the mover produces the unity in things. If he regards the first principle as the cause of the unity in the whole universe, which he believes to be the moving cause of the whole, he could not, even if he wished, avoid declaring it to be the cause of its substance and being. For he supposes that each thing has being in the same way as it has unity, and he says that being and one are convertible. And just as he posits "good" and "genus" as synonymous terms for all beings, extending through all beings, even if not predicated synonymously of all, so he generally treats the term "cause." In the fourth book of the Metaphysics, dividing the term "cause," he discusses the moving cause as follows: "Further, the source of change or rest, such as the deliberator is the cause, and the father of the child, and in general the maker of what is made, and the changer of what is changed."

27. Here, Aristotle provides examples of the moving cause, citing the deliberator and the father of the child. Among moving causes, some give the ultimate perfection to the thing, either by introducing the substantial form, as the father does in natural things, or by introducing the form of art, as a builder might. However, even what prepares the matter for the form can be called an efficient cause, such as a stonemason or carpenter, though not in the strict sense according to those who arrange the ultimate principles, to which the form necessarily follows. For in this way, a human is born from a human, with the father providing the matter appropriate to the rational form, while the first principle produces the form. This form is poured into the material instrument, not created before being poured in, as those around Plato imagine, but simultaneously poured in and created. This is the manner in which the sacred scripture describes the first

creation of man. What assists the efficient cause in achieving its end also differs from it in purpose, for it does not seek its own end, as the efficient cause does, but the end of the efficient cause. Just as the secondary cause cooperates with the primary cause toward the latter's end in all ordered efficient causes, so too does the assisting cause. All these aspects are encompassed in the example of the father. There is also a moving cause that deliberates, through which the end and form of the action are imparted to the agent, as the first efficient cause does through intellect for every secondary efficient cause, whether it acts by nature or by thought. For it gives the end and form of production to the secondary efficient cause, just as architectural arts guide subordinate crafts, and as the first cause guides all of nature.

28. To this general class of cause, the Philosopher (Aristotle) universally ascribes the efficient cause, stating that there is something which, in some way, is not only the cause of what is made but also the cause of change in what is changed. He adds to change both rest and stability, because natural motion and rest are traced back to the same cause. Similarly, forced rest and motion are also traced back to the same cause, to which the causality of what acts without change belongs, when compared to the rule of natural motion. For what occurs without change and not in succession but all at once resembles what happens contrary to nature. Thus, in two examples—that of the father and that of the deliberator—he touches on the two universal principles of motion from which all things come: the principle of intention in the deliberator and the principle of nature in the father. Therefore, he does not call the moving cause only the cause of motion but also the efficient cause: for things that change, it is not without change, and for things that are unchangeable according to him, it is without change.

29. It is difficult to believe that Aristotle considers the celestial bodies to be causes not only of motion but also of being for other things, even though they themselves do not change, while the cause that moves the celestial bodies is said to be only the cause of their motion, as if they do not change in their being. This would imply that the heavens possess more activity than the first cause of all things, through which they partake of divinity, eternality, and immutability, as Aristotle everywhere asserts that the heavens derive these qualities from the first cause, which is far more fitting for what is most divine and best. This is clear in the second book of On the Heavens, where he says: "It has been shown that what is moved is first, simple, ungenerated, indestructible, and altogether unchangeable; but it is much more reasonable that what moves it should be such. For the first of the first, the simple of the simple, and the indestructible and ungenerated of the indestructible and ungenerated must be the moving cause." Thus, even the first cause of being for things in motion is, according to him, the first cause of being for all things absolutely, and it is the moving cause. And the mover must be much more the cause of the substance of things. For it is clear that the terms "first," "simple," "indestructible," and "ungenerated" are not predicated synonymously of both the heavens and the first cause, but much more of the first cause, though they are predicated homonymously of both, properly of the first cause and by analogy of the heavens. For it is not by chance that they are predicated homonymously, since Aristotle says in the second book of On the Heavens that nothing happens by chance or spontaneously in eternal things, but everything happens for some cause. That they are not predicated synonymously is clear from the fact that the common attributes belong much more to the mover, while each has its own unique attributes. For the heavens change in place, but the first principle does not change in any way. The heavens are of a corporeal nature, but the first principle has no share in body or matter. Moreover, in the twentieth book of the Metaphysics, he says: "How can there be order if there is nothing eternal and separate that remains?"

This implies that there could be no eternal order in things unless there were some separate and eternal principle that gives eternality to things. If the first mover is the cause of eternality, and eternality is "always being," then the first mover is, according to Aristotle, the cause of the heavens' "always being." And if it is the cause of this, it is much more the cause of their being, for giving being requires a greater and more enduring power. Aristotle's view is further confirmed by what he says in the twentieth book of the Metaphysics, where he raises the question: "If there is a substance and principle of such a nature as we are now seeking, and this is one and the same for all things, both eternal and perishable, it is puzzling why, since the principle is the same, some things under it are eternal and others are not." He does not provide a solution to this puzzle there, but from what he says elsewhere, it is clear that he strongly affirms the existence of such a nature and that it is the principle of all things, both perishable and imperishable. He considers the primary reason why some things derived from it are perishable to be their greater distance from it. For this reason, he says that generation and corruption are established in perishable things through the intermediate cause, which is imperishable in substance. This intermediate cause is likened to the first cause in its immutability but differs from it in that it changes in place, whereas the first cause is wholly unchangeable, as befits the first and most self-sufficient principle of all. In general, Aristotle makes it clear that he regards God not only as the efficient cause but also as the final and paradigmatic cause of the heavens and, through them, of all being, believing Him to be the creator of the entire universe. For in the first book of On Principles, he says that the form of a natural thing is divine, good, and desirable—clearly in likeness to the form that is most divine, best, and ultimate among desirable things. This is the separate and immovable nature, which is the principle of being as being and is therefore the subject of first philosophy, as he himself says in that work: "It is the task of first philosophy to determine with precision whether the principle according to form is one or many, and what it or they are." He discusses this in detail in the thirtieth book of the Metaphysics. Just as all things desire that form, so matter desires the natural form. And just as matter is deficient in form, so the things that desire that principle are also deficient, even if they are complete and self-sufficient in comparison to other things. Just as matter is in potentiality because of form, so all things are in actuality because of the first principle, for according to Aristotle, substance is by nature in actuality. And just as the forms of generated and perishable things derive from the influence of the celestial bodies, so the forms of these imperishable and movable things derive from the immovable and first substance. For since there is an analogy, as the natural form is to that form, and as the desiring is to the desired, all such things must follow in a similar way by analogy. They differ, however, in that the form is imparted to the generated thing by the mover, as Aristotle himself says, because the mover will bring some form. But the first form is the same as the efficient cause, and thus this form differs in reality from the efficient cause, as the simple differs from the composite, and as the part differs from the whole, which is the principle of actuality. That form, however, is one with the thing, for it is not in the efficient cause but is itself the efficient cause. Even if things do not attain the exact likeness of that form, just as a generated human does not fully attain the likeness of the generator, they still grasp some likeness by manifesting the Logos conceived by God and His intellectual will, the Holy Spirit. They are likened to Him in being generated from Him and in desiring the inherent mode of the Creator's goodness. Let these things be added beyond Aristotle, as they belong to sacred faith, though Aristotle himself provides many starting points for such truth, as does Plato.

30. It is sufficient, then, for those brought into being by the first cause to have the divine form within themselves, just as the house in the mind of the craftsman is well-imitated in the material house. For it is clear that the entire universe was brought into being by the first cause, not according to the likeness of natural agents but as from a craftsman. If, therefore, both the form and the paradigm are placed by Aristotle in the same genus of cause, as he says in the second book of the Physics: "In another way, the form and the paradigm are causes, but it is better to say that God is the paradigmatic cause of the whole because of the imperfect likeness." For these reasons, God is not only the efficient cause but also the formal cause, that is, the paradigmatic cause. For using Himself as the paradigm, He created the entire universe, not attending to some forms lying outside Himself. Therefore, the cause of the distinction among beings arises from the order of the forms and the principles that the first intellect conceived within Himself—not from some variety of other forms, as those around Plato claim, who say that the universe was composed by the first cause with reference to such forms. For by saying this, they make that divine and most exalted intellect seem cruder than human craftsmen, who often create not with reference to an external form but to the form conceived in their mind, having received it beforehand from without but holding it within themselves and not taking it from outside themselves but setting it before themselves in the act of creation. Yet even they say that God is the creator of the forms, and thus He would be inferior to human craftsmen, who are praised for creating better than external models, while He would not be able to make things equal to, let alone better than, the ideas. If He made the ideas without reference to any paradigms, why would He make other things much worse, even though paradigms were available to Him? What would prevent the ideas themselves from having been made with reference to other ideas, to which they are inferior in likeness, and this leading to an infinite regress of ever-worse creations by God? But if God made the ideas with reference to Himself, being inferior to Him in nature, why would He not also make all things with reference to Himself, since He can be the form of all things, if it is necessary that things made according to a form be inferior to it, while He Himself is infinitely superior to His works?

31. It is also remarkable if those who say that Plato posits the world as eternal, not with reference to God Himself but to the ideal world, are telling the truth. For even if the forms can be eternal, what is made with reference to them cannot similarly be eternal, but must differ from them in nature and eternality. These matters will be examined more precisely in other discourses, for now we have touched on them only incidentally and superficially. But according to Aristotle and the truth itself, what acts by nature and synonymously imparts the likeness of substance, while what acts by art and homonymously introduces the intelligible form into what is made, not as it exists in the intellect but as it can and ought to be participated in by the thing made, which is in a much worse state. This form is the same as the intellect that produces it in substance, being an intellect that is thought, even if it differs from the divine intellect as its opposite in the ideal account. It is not the same as the things that come to be through it or with reference to it, but only similar. For the divine intellect thinks it, even if it is ordered in some way toward the effect, yet it remains within itself. Hence, even if it is a paradigm of a worse nature, being participated in by a lesser state, it is nevertheless established in its proper dignity and is truly an intellect, pure and unaffected by anything that belongs to the things that have received their existence through it. And it is nothing other, in reality, than the first and uncaused intellect.

32. That form, then, which is wholly immaterial, immovable, and first of all (for we must return to the original purpose), is also the moving cause of the other forms, or rather the efficient cause, and moves them toward its own likeness, imparting this likeness to all, more perfectly to some and less perfectly to others. Hence, it follows that it is also the end and good of all, not as something inherent but as moving, perfecting, and turning all things toward itself from without, that is, as the best and ultimate good, but not as its own end. For it does not act by being affected but only by acting. Hence, it aims not to receive but only to give. And the things ordered toward it and desiring it receive from it only the perfection that it wills to bring about in them. It gains nothing from them, as other efficient causes do from what proceeds from them in any way. Thus, according to Aristotle, God is by nature the efficient, paradigmatic, and final cause of all things. For these three contain the account of the end and the good, and Aristotle attributes the good, the perfect, and the self-sufficient most of all to the first cause. All these things follow from his positions. Moreover, no one is unaware, according to Aristotle, that these causes correspond to one another, namely the efficient and the final. For just as the efficient cause is the cause of the end in some things, so the end is the cause for the efficient, not of its substance but of its being a cause and an agent. For the efficient cause is a cause by acting, and it acts for the sake of an end. Therefore, it is better for God to be a final cause than an efficient cause, since the final cause is the cause of causes. Matter exists for the sake of form, form for the sake of the efficient cause, and the efficient cause for the sake of the end. And where both are present together, the end is most of all the cause.

33. For even if both kinds of cause belong to the same thing, as Aristotle says in the thirtieth book, they differ in their formal account. Therefore, it is necessary to inquire in which respect something is most of all a cause. Hence, concerning Anaxagoras, who says that the good is the first principle as the mover, Aristotle remarks that while the intellect moves all things, it does so for the sake of something. Therefore, it was necessary to posit another principle for the sake of which it moves. Unless, perhaps, Anaxagoras was saying, as we do, that it is possible for the same thing to be both thinking and thought, and thus both efficient and final cause, just as health and medicine are related. For medicine produces health, and health is in a certain way medicine itself, since in the productive sciences, the object of knowledge, when considered apart from matter, is the science itself, and in the theoretical sciences, the "what it was to be" of a thing is its thought and knowledge.

34. Here, Aristotle clearly attributes both a productive and a theoretical science to God, since he resolves the objections that seemed to arise concerning God being His own thought by means of both. By the likeness to the productive sciences, He is both efficient and final cause, and by the likeness to the theoretical sciences, He is clearly the formal cause, that is, the first, best, and most perfect intellect. If Aristotle thought that God was only the end, he would not have called Him a principle in the thirtieth book of the Metaphysics. Thus, he knew Him both as a principle, that is, an efficient or moving cause, and as an end. Therefore, he demonstrates the eternality of the unmoved mover by the same argument by which he shows that there cannot be an infinite regress in the genus of efficient causes. If he thought that God was only the end and thus moved things only in this way, he would have called God a principle because the end is not a principle except insofar as it is in the aim of the efficient cause. Hence, in the aforementioned thirtieth book, when he speaks of the efficient cause as a principle, mentioning form and matter and adding privation, he does not simultaneously mention the end. Therefore, he would have thought that the efficient cause of the heavens is a

principle, in whose aim the end lies, and that the end itself must also be a principle. But he would have erred in calling this end the first principle and in saying that the ungenerated heavens are moved most of all by such an end, for such an end exists only potentially, coming into actual existence through the efficient cause. However, it is impossible for Aristotle to have thought this, as is clear from what he says about the first principle of all things. Moreover, it is evident that even if we suppose him to say things that are consistent with or contrary to his own views, or even impossible, he necessarily thought that there is an efficient principle of the heavens, not merely a moving principle by reason of the end. Without this, the heavens, insofar as they are moved by the first principle, are not movers; therefore, they are not moved by it as an end. For the efficient cause is moved by the end as acting for its sake, but it does not make the end for itself, since it would not desire it. Otherwise, it would be self-moved, which Aristotle does not seem to allow either for the heavens or for the unmoved mover. Therefore, the heavens are moved as by an efficient cause. But the heavens are also moved for the sake of an end, and the mover moves for the sake of an end. Therefore, since that mover is the best, it moves toward the best, that is, toward itself. And the heavens, being the best and most divine of bodies, are moved toward the best, and thus they are moved by the best, since the two are one.

35. These things are almost all in Aristotle's own words, if one wishes to pay close attention to them. We are not attributing a foreign opinion to him, as if demonstrating what Aristotle ought to have thought, but we are gathering from his own words what he actually thought about these matters. Therefore, according to Aristotle, God is both the moving and final cause of the universe, as well as the formal cause, that is, the paradigmatic cause, as has been demonstrated earlier. Those who think otherwise about him do not pay attention to his words or his thought. For in his own words, he declares the eternal, first, and unmoved principle to be the cause of being and life for all things that exist in any way. And he says that the heavens depend on this principle for their being, as has been demonstrated, and also from what he posits concerning the heavens and the first principle. And in general, concerning the principle and other matters, this is necessarily concluded. Without the others, it suffices to show Aristotle's opinion clearly, as at the end of the thirtieth book, where he considers the principle of all things, order, and eternal generation in the best and most perfect manner, and adds: "If there are no other things besides the perceptible, there will be no principle, order, generation, or the heavens. But there will always be a principle of the principle, as all theologians and natural philosophers say." For if the intelligible substances do not exist, it is impossible for there to be a principle, since the argument has established that the principle is an intelligible, immaterial, and immovable substance. And if the principle is abolished, order must also be abolished, for it has been shown that just as the good and order of an army depend on the general and come from him, so too the order of the universe depends on the first mover. Therefore, in the universe, which is clearly ordered, that form of order is fulfilled, which lies in the intellect and will of the first efficient cause. For the good of the universe is not only in the universe itself but also in something separate from it, which is the cause of the order in the universe. Therefore, it is more good. For the good in the will of the orderer, he says, does not have as its cause the order in the ordered thing, as the general has the order in the army, but the reverse: the order in the universe has as its cause the will of the orderer, just as the order of the army is due to the general. For the good of the army is in fulfilling the general's will. Therefore, just as the abolition of the principle abolishes order, so the abolition of order abolishes generation. For even if generation is eternal in its duration, he says, beings must be distinguished from one another in substance and have their own activities. And if this is not

by chance, it must be by some cause, either the first principle or nature, which serves the first principle. For nature is a kind of assistance toward the proper end of each thing, directed by the first intellect and orderer. Therefore, beings must be ordered in their own activities toward one end through the proximate causes, which are referred to the first principle. Some things, he says, even sharing in the goods that belong to them, are causes of generation for the universe. For in this way, they are ordered toward the common good of the universe, being causes of substance, existence, and order for other things, insofar as it pertains to them, and imitating the separate good of the universe. And just as they themselves have their being directly from it, so they impart being to others. Therefore, if the abolition of the first principle abolishes order, and the abolition of order abolishes generation, then the abolition of the first principle abolishes generation. Therefore, he declares the first principle, which he posits as intellectual and immaterial, to be the principle of order in all beings, of generation in generated things, and of all the heavens. And the causal and principial power of this principle extends from the heavens to all generated and perishable things, so that without it, none of those things could exist.

36. Having said this, Aristotle criticizes those who posit number as the first principle and another nature following it, namely magnitude, and after that the perceptible things, assigning different principles to each of them. "For they make the substance of the universe episodic," that is, disordered and contingent, as if it could equally well exist in order or in disorder, whether any of its parts are present or absent, all of which pertain to accidents. Since the principle of an accident must itself be an accident, and magnitudes and numbers are accidents of beings, their principles would also be accidents, and so would the principles of those things of which they are principles. Thus, the nature of the universe would be episodic. But this is impossible, he says, because beings do not wish to be arranged badly, having a certain nature inclined toward the good. The multiplicity of principles would create a bad disposition in the universe if they were not referred to one first principle, from which being and well-being flow to the others and through them to all beings in certain degrees. This is also seen in states, households, and every multitude. But this universe is governed in the best way, and therefore by one ruler and principle, which is the first mover and efficient cause, the first intelligible and intellect, the first desirable and the first good, which has been shown to be God.

37. From many other passages, it is clear that Aristotle believes there is an efficient principle of the universe, and not only that but also a final and paradigmatic cause, as has been said earlier. It suffices to cite his own words, which almost all agree on this point. From these, the solution to the objections is also clear. However, it is necessary to address each objection separately.

38. To the first and second objections generally, it must be said that, even if it is possible to say that in the lost books of the Metaphysics Aristotle perhaps spoke more broadly and clearly about the first principle, many things are said to be lost, and it is plausible because Aristotle leaves many questions unresolved in the surviving books, deferring their solution to further treatises, as he seems to have done in other works. Even if this can be said, it is more accurate to respond as follows: Aristotle regarded God as the maker and cause of this universe, as has become clear from what has been said. If he does not call Him a creator, there is nothing surprising in this. For if by the name "creator" the universal efficient cause of all being is understood, and Aristotle clearly holds such a cause, the error is perhaps in the wording, not in the opinion, and indeed it is not an error according to his own position. Since Aristotle wanted the universe to be eternal, he reasonably

did not say that it was created or that God is its creator. For "creation" is said of things that are transformed for the better, and "to create" is to make something from what already exists, as in the case of craftsmen. Therefore, we call all artisans and manual laborers "creators," even though the term was originally taken from those who work on public projects, who are the collectors of public dues. But "to produce" is more simply called "to make," and even more "to move," taking "to move" in a general sense. This is how Plato uses the term, and Aristotle also uses it in the same way when he distinguishes the moving cause from the other kinds of causes. If he seemed to some to be misrepresenting Plato's self-motion, we have already explained the reason for this. Thus, Aristotle uses "to move" and "to make" to signify simple progression, while "creation" he uses to signify the transformation of some preexisting nature into something better and more perfect, and he often used this term in this sense in his works on the generation of animals, but it is impossible to apply this notion to the progression of all beings from the first principle. And it is not surprising, since even some of the holy teachers, while acknowledging God as the producer of all things, do not think He should be called a creator but rather a maker. For "to make," says Augustine, is to bring into existence what did not exist at all, while "to create" is to produce something else from what already exists, which did not exist before. And Moses says: "In the beginning, God made the heavens and the earth."

39. It is absurd to condemn Aristotle not for what he said poorly but for what he entirely omitted, neither affirming nor denying, when his silence rather persuades and carries even greater weight in these matters. For if Aristotle had anything to criticize in Plato for calling God the creator, maker, or cause of the universe, he would have devised far more arguments against this than he did against the theory of forms. But this was impossible, for Aristotle would truly have been no better than a child, as Plethon insults him, if he had opposed Plato on this point concerning the divine, especially since Aristotle himself embedded this opinion far more clearly and precisely in his own arguments, as has been sufficiently demonstrated. Thus, one can argue the opposite, both generally and far more truthfully, that if Aristotle had thought God was not the creator of the universe, he would have somewhere said that God is not the creator, or at least not the cause of its substance and being, whether as an efficient cause or as an end, especially knowing that Plato was zealous for this opinion, whom Aristotle so loudly and crudely criticizes (to put it mildly), to the point that some have thought he was misrepresenting him. Since, therefore, Aristotle nowhere says this, it is clear that he did not think it. Not only did he not deny this opinion, but he is emphatic in affirming it, often acknowledging it. He only refrained from using the term "creator," and not without reason, as has been said. If he refrained from the term poorly, it is far worse for someone to attempt to refute and disparage such a great philosopher over a matter of wording, especially when Aristotle used better and more appropriate terms, consistent with his other positions. Otherwise, even Moses could be criticized for saying, "In the beginning, God made," and not "created," and he would share in the criticism of Aristotle, just as Aristotle shares with us Christians in the slander. For we have been accused of believing that temporal generation necessarily follows causal generation, both we and Aristotle.

40. Specifically, in response to the second objection, it must be understood that Aristotle, in the thirtieth book of the Metaphysics, agrees with Anaxagoras, who says that the good is a principle, but criticizes him for speaking indistinctly. "For it remains to inquire," he says, "whether the good is a principle as a mover, as a form, or as an end. For although the good can be a principle in all these ways, since each of these is both a principle and a good, the good is more properly called a principle in one of these ways than in the others."

Here, Aristotle clearly wants to attribute being a principle to the good, more as an end than as a mover or a form, since the form comes from the mover, and the mover, especially if it is intellect, moves for the sake of something. Thus, even if the mover is good, what moves the mover is far more good, and this is the end. Therefore, the end has more of the character of the good and the principle than the efficient cause. And this is why Aristotle honors God more as an end, for thus He would be the ultimate good, the best, and that for the sake of which all things exist. However, Aristotle does not say that God is an end in such a way that He is not also the end of substance and being, or that He is not the efficient cause. This is clear first from what he posits, that God is the efficient and moving cause and the cause of being and life for all things that partake of substance and life in any way. Second, it is clear from this: the account of the end always presupposes the account of the efficient cause. And if God is the end of the heavens, there must also be an efficient cause of the heavens, for the heavens themselves cannot be the efficient cause of themselves. Otherwise, the end they desire would be within themselves and not outside them, and thus they would not be the first moved thing but rather self-moved, as Plato says, or, according to Aristotle, an unmoved mover. And thus, they would themselves be the first principle of all things, which is the opposite of what Aristotle posits in the thirtieth book of the Metaphysics, where he says: "The good and the end of the heavens is a certain nature existing outside them, just as in things moved locally, their proper place, or as the general in an army. It is by desiring this nature that the heavens are moved." But it is also impossible for any other nature to be the efficient cause of the heavens besides the first principle, for it would have to act for the sake of an end, and this end is, according to Aristotle, the first principle. Thus, the heavens would be moved not by the first principle itself but by that which moves for its sake. But if this were so, the heavens would not be the first moved thing, but rather what moves them would be. This is the opposite of what Aristotle holds to be true. Therefore, it remains that, following Aristotle's positions, the first final cause is also the first efficient cause of the heavens. Moreover, if the heavens have no accidents, being unchangeable according to Aristotle except in place, everything that belongs to the heavens must derive from their substance, such as their motion, its eternality, its causality, and the order of the parts of the universe within it. Thus, the end of the motion of the heavens and the end of their substance is shown, according to Aristotle, to be the same.

41. Furthermore, the first principle is the highest good and the object of desire according to Aristotle, and it is an intellect that thinks nothing other than itself. It is perfected by no other intelligible but by thinking itself, it thinks all other things. Nor would it be desirable unless all goodness and perfection flowed from it to each thing, for each thing desires to be perfect. Nor would it think other things by thinking itself unless there were some order and relation of other things to it. And what could this be if not the relation of likeness, which is found in all effects toward their cause? For it is for the sake of this likeness that the desire for the good exists, for nothing desires anything unless it wishes to be like it and considers it worthwhile to attain it. Otherwise, the desire would be in vain, being neither for the good nor for the sake of partaking in such a good as far as possible. Therefore, the heavens desire not only to move but also all other things that they receive directly from the first principle, being connected to it, as the Philosopher says, in simplicity, in being first, ungenerated, indestructible, and altogether unchangeable, and as the cause of generation and change in the things around us. For they possess all these things by desiring to be likened to the principle, since, as Aristotle himself says, the principle possesses all these things to a far greater degree. Thus, to speak the truth according to Aristotle, the heavens do not desire to move but rather their motion, that is, their eternal

movement, is a sign that they desire and partake of the best and most divine, being eternally and unchangeably moved and desiring. Therefore, the Philosopher does not say that the heavens are moved toward the end as if moved by another toward it, which is common to all things ordered toward something, but rather that they are moved by it, since the same thing is both the efficient and final cause of the heavens, the unmoved first principle, which Aristotle posits as an end by calling it unmoved and as a first principle by calling it efficient. For it is not proper for the end to be a principle in the strict sense but rather the ultimate, nor is it proper for the mover and efficient cause to be unmoved, for it is moved by the end, which is its cause of moving and being a cause. What combines both of these is reasonably posited by Aristotle as the first principle and at the same time unmoved. And for this reason, the heavens are not moved more toward it than by it, nor do they desire it more as moved toward it than as moved by it. Otherwise, if they were moved only toward it, being moved by something else, which is entirely necessary, they could not escape generation and change. But now, since the same thing is both that toward which and by which they are moved, they possess their being wholly and eternally, according to Aristotle, and are free from all change. It is clear, therefore, from what has been said, that Aristotle nowhere says that God is not the end of being for substances but only of motion, and rather the opposite is concluded from what he has said.

42. In response to the third objection, it must be noted that for Aristotle, "coming to be" does not only signify being from another but also previously not being, as he states in On the Heavens. Those who construct numbers from the One and the Dyad, or from the Great and the Small, and speak of some attraction and formation of them, and thus increase them infinitely, clearly posit a before and after in the progression of numbers. For in things that do not come to be simultaneously, the parts are prior to the whole. But they also add some other form. For things that progress in this way, there would be a kind of generation similar to that of all natural things. However, it is impossible, since numbers are eternal, for such generation to exist, according to them. Thus, Aristotle himself does not say that "coming to be" means only being from a cause, nor does he criticize them for saying that numbers come to be in this way, as if they were proceeding from some cause while positing them as eternal, or as a progression into being altogether. Rather, he criticizes them because they attribute a kind of natural generation to numbers, in which there is a before and after and alteration, even though they posit them as eternal. That this is his criticism is clear from Aristotle's own words. For after saying, "It is absurd and impossible to attribute generation to eternal things," he adds: "As for the Pythagoreans, there is no need to doubt whether they do this or not, for they clearly say that when the One was constituted, whether from planes, color, seed, or from what they are at a loss to explain, immediately the nearest thing to the infinite was drawn and limited by the seed. This is what it means to come to be in natural things." And a little later: "They do not speak of the generation of the odd, as it is clear that there is generation of the even. But some construct the even first from unequal things, the Great and the Small being equalized. Therefore, inequality must exist in them before they are equalized. If they were always equalized, they would not have been unequal before. For what is eternal has no before. Thus, it is clear that they do not posit the generation of numbers for the sake of theory but because they evidently think of nature and being in this way." If Aristotle is slandering the Pythagoreans in this passage, that is another matter. But it is clear that he thinks they are speaking of a kind of generation of numbers in which there is a before and after and change, that is, natural generation, which he properly calls "generation" in On the Heavens, and for this reason he criticizes them for saying that the ideal numbers are eternal but generating

them in this way. This, as they say, would be clear even to the blind from what Aristotle has just said. But such generation of eternal things is considered impossible by all, both by those who philosophize that the world is eternal and by those who believe it was brought into being. Therefore, Aristotle is not compelled to think that the world is without cause or principle because he denies generation to eternal things, since he clearly declares it to have a principle and cause. Nor are we compelled to slander Aristotle, or rather, we choose not to. Thus, this objection is also weak, and to put it plainly, it is slanderous, just like the first objections, which are very crude.

43. For Aristotle, this point is most indicative that he considers the universe uncaused and uncreated. In the seventh book of Metaphysics, he says that the cause in some cases is the purpose, as perhaps in the case of a house or a bed; in other cases, the cause is that which first set it in motion. For this is also a cause; but this type of cause is sought in the processes of becoming and perishing; the other, however, in the state of being. In these passages, he clearly states that the creative cause is sought in the processes of becoming and perishing, whereas the final cause is sought in the state of being. Just as, evidently, the architectural cause is that which constructs the house, while the roof is the cause for both its becoming and its being. Therefore, if Aristotle believes that the heavens are uncreated, and that the creative cause is sought in the processes of becoming, it is clear that he considers only the created things to have a creative cause, while the heavens have only a final cause, as they are eternal and never come into being. Furthermore, in the eighth book of Metaphysics, he says that no one creates or generates the form, but rather the particular thing is made, and the form results from these. This concept is also used in many other places. It therefore seems from these arguments that he not only denies the first cause but also every such cause. For if the heavens are only form, no one creates or generates them; if they have form, the same conclusion follows again. For each of the things that have form exists more because of the form. If no one creates the form, it is clear that no one creates the being of the thing. Thus, neither the heavens nor anything else exists from a creative cause, as Aristotle has asserted.

44. Moreover, in the twentieth book of the Ethics, discussing God, he says: "For the living being who is deprived of action, and even more so of making, what remains but contemplation?" Thus, he asserts that God is not the creator of anything, which most of the names indicate as the procession of beings from God. As our theology also praises God as the creator of heaven and earth through Moses, saying, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Furthermore, in the first book of On the Generation of Animals, he asserts that seeking the creative cause is in some way the same as seeking the origin of each thing, so that if, according to Aristotle, the heavens have no origin, then they also have no creative cause according to him, just as if the heavens were created, they would have a creative cause. Since the inquiry about both is the same. But these arguments are not sufficient according to Aristotle. These and similar arguments can be refuted based on the earlier mentioned points. Plethon, either unwillingly defending Aristotle or acknowledging his inability to refute them, admits their weakness. He would not say, I think, nor would he convince anyone who knows better than he does that these arguments are weaker than those he has attempted to refute.

45. Secondly, Plethon asserts that Aristotle is mistaken in his account of being, as he claims it is participated in homonymously; for if it were homonymous, it would not be one. It must be one. Since all multiplicities proceed from one and ultimately from one, it is necessary that they also partake of a common

unity, and this is being. Furthermore, if being were homonymous, it would not be one. However, it is one, even according to Aristotle himself; for he says in the thirtieth book of Metaphysics.

It is not good to have many rulers; let there be one ruler.

46. Therefore, he too desires that there be one principle of beings; and this would be being. Thus, being is not homonymous.

47. Furthermore, the arguments through which Aristotle attempts to demonstrate that being is spoken of homonymously seem to achieve nothing necessary. For he says that in those things where there is a prior and a later, and a more and a less, these are not predicated synonymously if something common is said of them. Furthermore, he says that being is not a single genus because something else is predicated in opposition to being, namely, one; which also must be a genus. But this is impossible, as it is impossible for there to be multiple genera of everything. Therefore, being is not a genus. Furthermore, if being were a genus, he says, it would be divided by some differences into its species, which must exist apart from the essence of the genus. But nothing can exist apart from the essence of being, which would be a difference of being.

48. Plethon claims that these arguments are easily refutable. For the whiteness in wool is less white than the whiteness in snow, yet it is synonymous. Likewise, numbers, although some are prior and others are later, are not homonymous but are all numbers in the same sense. Similarly, the elements are prior to the compounds, yet they are synonymously substances. Nothing prevents something from being predicated in opposition to being and still being a genus, just as the risible is predicated of man, and yet man is a universal and synonymously exists in its particulars. Likewise, if the capability for movement is opposed to an animal, given that an animal is defined by its imagination, not its sensation, nothing prevents the genus from being synonymously predicated of those under it. Furthermore, it is not necessary that what is common to all genera also be common to the highest genus; nothing prevents there from being something peculiar to it that does not belong to the other genera. Additionally, it does not seem true that a difference exists apart from the essence of the genus; for rationality participates in the animal, being its difference. It is also not possible to say that rationality is a difference of animality; for rationality, being an abstraction, would be more a difference of life than of the animal. Rationality would similarly be a difference of the animal. But the Philosopher's maxim suffices in the opposite direction.

49.Therefore, it is necessary to know that others before Aristotle categorized everything either synonymously or homonymously, calling those things synonymous that share the same definition in any way, and those things homonymous that share only the name and not the definition in any way. Aristotle, having distinguished more precisely, added the analogical category to this dual classification. For he observed that there are things whose definitions are entirely the same, and there are things entirely different in definition, and there are others in between, where the definition is the same except with some difference. Because in the definition of the same name, the same name is taken with a different meaning, those that have the entirely same definition he calls synonymous, those that are entirely different he calls primarily homonymous; and those in between the purely homonymous and simply synonymous, he named analogical, which he sometimes calls homonymous by extension. Just as he says that the term "animal" is homonymously predicated in categories both of the true animal and of the depicted animal, yet it is analogically predicated. Likewise with

being; for he takes the homonymous then by simple opposition, which it has to the synonymously said, not in the manner of opposition; and as one might say more clearly, as a negation of the synonymous. Therefore, he seems to use the homonymous as a universal term in relation to the primarily homonymous and the analogical; and thus he takes the synonymous in one way, the homonymous in multiple ways. For he says in the eighth book of the Physics: "There are some homonyms that differ greatly, and some that have some similarity, and some that are close either in genus or analogy; so they do not seem to be homonyms, though they are." And he calls those that differ greatly homonyms, in which there is found a mere commonality of names; these are the cases of the primary names, which are also called homonyms purely by chance. In some, there is some similarity, as if the name "man" were said both of the living animal and the dead, or even the depicted, because they have some similarity to the true living man; and there are those even closer, as happening in the genus of the homonymy, like "body" said both of the heavenly and the corruptible body, being homonymous naturally, for they do not have the same matter; but synonymous logically, because they come together in the logical genus, for which reason they seem not to be homonymous purely. Therefore, they are close either by some analogy, that is, metaphorical similarity, like "shepherd" said both of the shepherd of sheep and the leader of the people, because each governs and leads the multitude under him; so because of this closeness, many seem not to be homonyms, though they greatly are. He called everything coming together by some similarity analogical, because it has some proportional analogy, either by reference to one or to each other. A medical book and a medical instrument are called so because both come from medicine; a healthy drug and a healthy urine are called so because both relate to health, although in different ways. Socrates is called both the true and his image, because the image is similar to the true and exists because of it.

50. Therefore, all these distinctions of homonyms and synonyms are discussed in the third book of Metaphysics and in many other places. There, discussing being, he says: "Being is said in many ways, but with reference to one and a certain nature, and not homonymously." Then, having given the example of health, he adds: "Similarly, we will take other things following these; thus, being is said in many ways, but all refer to one principle." And again: "The definition is the same, he says, for synonyms; it is not the same except for some addition or subtraction; this would be the case with analogicals and with reference to one."

51. In the eighth book, he says that number and the act of being will no longer be one, if something is subtracted or added. This applies to all things said with reference to one. Aristotle, therefore, divides more precisely than his predecessors, who divided into only two categories; and being, he says, is neither synonymously said of those to which it is applied, nor homonymously in the primary homonyms, but analogically and with reference to one; for thus, he says, being is said in many ways, but all refer to one principle."

52. And again, in the twentieth book: "Since the philosopher's science is of being, as universally and not in part, and being is said in many ways and not in one way, if it were said homonymously, without anything in common, it would not be under one science; for there would be no genus of such things. But if it were said with something in common, it would be under one science; so it seems to be said in the aforementioned way, like medical and healthy things; for we say each of these in many ways." He says the same in the seventh book: "Since the correct thing is neither said homonymously nor in the same way, but as medical with

reference to the same and one," and the rest. Rather, let us briefly summarize how Aristotle distinguishes about being.

53. In the fifth book of Metaphysics, he divides being into the essential and the accidental, the true, which is in the mind where synthesis and division occur, and the universal saying, contradiction, and alongside these into potentiality and actuality. This division of being into different concepts of the name would then exist. Therefore, he himself says there: "But since being, said simply, is said in many ways, just as saying that the name of being, said simply and universally, means many and different things." Then, having distinguished being itself from the accidental being, he divided it into what it is and the other genera. Of these, the first is the essence and a kind of principle as a subject, while the rest are all quantities or qualities or affections or some such thing of the primary being, and are no more from it than they are of it. This is from which the others depend and for which they are said. Therefore, this division pertains to things said analogically; it is a division of a thing having one name and one general definition. Let it be said thus, since Aristotle is accustomed to call it both a common and a universal genus; but the specific definition is not one but multiple. For the definition of each is taken from the manner of their existence, and what is in itself has one manner of existence, which is distinguished from the accidental being and the true being, that is, the mental, rightly, there is one definition of being, both in essence and in the accidental. For it is true in itself the essence to be part of, and the accidental to be such a part of. And if the accidental being has existence through the essence, it is not specifically from the essence but is said to be from the specific existence of the accidental as of the essence, from its specific existence. And thus being has one common manner of the existence in both these and at the same time one common definition. Up to this point, being seems to be the genus of essence and accident, but there is something additional. For if the common definition in both is one in itself, it is participated in first by the essence and then by the accident. It is clear, then, that the accident has the essence as its cause; the being is specifically inherent in both, as has been said. And something is participated in first by its cause or by what is from it; nor should anyone wonder how the definition of essence and accident exists in being in the essence before the accident; for the heat of fire and the heated iron have one definition, but this does not exist in any way additionally, and the definition of heat is found and preserved in fire before the iron; for it has its being through fire and in iron; and many other examples make this clear. Therefore, since the purely synonymous has one definition shared equally by those under it and those of which it is said, as Aristotle and Porphyry think, but being is not equally participated in by essence and accident, but rather in order of priority and posteriority, it necessarily follows that being is not synonymous; and since it has one definition in some way, it is not homonymous, and thus it is rightly classified among the analogicals, and among those closest to it; for not all analogically said things have one manner of existence in those of which they are said, even if all are participated in by the prior and the posterior participants.

54. If in each genus, the Philosopher says there is something primary, which measures the others, but he does not wish this to be a specific kind among the differentiated kinds as primary to it, so that it would not be placed in that genus primarily, but something minimal in the existence of each thing placed under the genus, one can discern this by analysis, just as in the genus of quantity, the unit, and through it, the point; similarly, in the genus of essence, the form and for its sake, the matter. This does not prevent essence and quantity from being genera. If man were prior to horse, or animal, animal would not be a genus for both; and if the line were prior to the plane, being both quantities, quantity would not be their genus. Now, however, horse is

separate from man, and line from surface; some accident would not be separated from essence. Therefore, this prevents being from being a synonym and from the synonymous category extending to everything, although being predicated of all beings, I mean of intelligible things. Not, however, of its own affections, nor of the ultimate and simplest differences in each genus. The Philosopher defines genus primarily by saying it is predicated of several species in what it is by one definition, at the same time participated in, and by saying the definition of the genus is outside the definition of the differences; where any of these is absent, that cannot be a genus, whether it is being or anything else; but rather only as something common and supervening over all. Thus, he calls being a genus in many ways, and it is not synonymous simply, but either analogically.

55. From these arguments, the refutation against the oppositions is clear. However, it is necessary to respond to each of them individually, so that the falsehood of Pletho's arguments may become evident even to those less able to follow.

56. As to the first and second arguments, it must be stated together that we agree with Aristotle in that all things derive from one and ultimately one; for he himself says in the second book of Metaphysics that everything of this kind by participation is referred to another such thing essentially; and since being is by its own existence the primary principle according to him, which he says is God, all beings must be referred to and participate in it, having obtained their own existence by some similarity of his will. However, it does not seem necessary to Aristotle, nor is it necessary to agree with Plethon, that there must be a common participation of one synonymously; there is no such necessity. If the primary cause of everything is sufficient to produce everything participating in it by the infinity of its power, what need is there for a common being? The similarity of the primary cause established in things is sufficient to bring everything to unity, if they are produced according to some analogy and order, which consists in their sharing and differing from one another. Although if this common thing were the creative cause of beings, it would have some reason; but those who posit this common thing as the essential cause of beings say this, which is impossible; for the individual beings are essentially beings in themselves, as has been said, even if they creatively come from the primary principle. For if Aristotle says that there is one principle of beings in the thirtieth book of Metaphysics and one ruler and governor of the entire universe, he did not think it necessary to posit one specific principle, being another than that; he himself made the first creative principle also somehow specific, that is, paradigmatic, which is the opinion of Aristotle and all those thinking well, as has been said before; and it is impossible to posit being as a specific principle of beings, if it is set as a genus and synonymous and separated from the individual beings, as those around Plato assert.

57. It is evident from this that it is impossible for the common being to be separated if it is to be participated in synonymously by all things. For that which signifies the essence of something cannot be separated from it in its being; it is impossible for the essence, whose essence it is, to be separated. But the genera and species signify the essence of the individual beings, being said of them, and are from their essence; hence, they cannot be separated. Thus, being cannot be separated if it is synonymous.

58. That it is also impossible for this to be a genus, if there is a specific principle of beings, is evident from this. For the specific principle must be real; no real principle is said of that which is from it by the category in which we say this is this, but rather by which we say this is from this. Just as we say that man is soul, according to Aristotle, demonstrating the specific principle of man as this, but rather we say that he is

from soul and body. The genus of species is predicated in the prior way, not the latter; thus, if being is a genus, it cannot be a specific principle of individual beings, nor can such a principle be a genus.

59. For all these reasons, Aristotle wisely and skillfully considered the first principle to be both the creative and specific cause of all things, which he says is one and primarily essence, as shown in the first question, and from this comes being and life to those who participate in essence and life in any way. The genera and species, as beings, exist in themselves actually, of which they are said to be genera and species; for they are from their essence and parts of it; but as universals, in the way that is useful for our knowledge, he says they are certain conceptual entities assigned to things in their mutual order, through which we understand the essence of each thing conveniently and necessarily; the common exists first in them and others, then examining the particular and from these combining the definition of the essence. He also says these are separable according to reason; for the definition of the supervenient is distinct from and separate from the definition of the underlying; and he says the universal is not a real principle of those under it; for it would be really distinct from those under it; but this is impossible; for the genus and species present the same thing, differing only according to reason. But he says the universal is only the principle of understanding the underlying. And of the universals, he says some are synonymous, predicated by name and thing, as said before, without any difference; these, he says, are the genera; others, homonymous analogical, because they are not selected in the same identity of thing, but according to some different properties, at least according to the prior and the posterior.

60. Thus, he says that being, said of essence and accident, is neither a creative principle of beings, as the suprasubstantial being, nor specific, nor a separate genus, nor synonymous due to the aforementioned reasons, but it is one and common, and is participated in by all in unity and commonality of the previously mentioned category. Plethon, however, disregards this, wanting everything to be equally one, equally common, and equally participated in, both divine and human things, the conceptualizations of the universals, and falsely claiming this due to his unwillingness or inability to divide the many aspects of being.

61. The objections he raises against Aristotelian arguments must thus be resolved. The term "white," said simply and in itself, is synonymous, as long as it is placed in the genus of quality with some differences towards the opposing species; for the form is one and simple and has one definition, and it would not admit of more and less, but as it is in snow and wool. Neither is it synonymous; for there is no genus of white wool and white snow, since the former is simple and in itself placed in a genus, the latter is composite and accidental, and thus admits of more and less. Any accidental form, even if not more and less in itself, has some aptitude to be found more and less in different subjects, or in the same subject at different times. This happens in two ways: either by the power of that which produces the form being sometimes stronger and sometimes weaker in the same subject and in several; or by the subject being more or less prepared for the reception of the form; which can happen for various reasons, but especially due to the mixture of more and less of the opposing quality, though some think the quantity of the power producing is the cause of this. Therefore, white is an accidental form and can very well be separated from the essence of the thing, having some aptitude to be found more and less in things and in different degrees; it is in the form itself. Hence, if we take white in itself, it does not share in wool and is synonymous; but it is neither more nor less; if we take it as it is in wool and snow, it has more and less, but is not predicated synonymously; for what is predicated synonymously has one essence; white, however, exists in wool and snow in a different manner of being.

62. Concerning numbers, if we were speaking of those in sensibles, the same reasoning applies to them as to the white, that three men and four cannot be synonymous; nor can there be a genus of them, neither according to Aristotle nor Plato himself. If we consider numbers in themselves, if someone says there is a prior and later in them, in that one form of number is prior to another, this is false; for the concept of number is equally and simultaneously in both the number composed of two units and of three and of more, and no more is a number composed of more units than one composed of fewer. For the fact of being composed of units, having a common measure, and being specified by the unit, these things are common to each number; it does not have these for any other reason. If someone considers the prior and later in them, in that the fewer numbers measure the greater, this is accidental in them; it is not peculiar to numbers but to the greater and lesser numbers, not in actuality but in potentiality. Thus, being prior and later does not prevent them from being synonymous, just as Socrates being later than Sophroniscus does not make him not synonymous; for as a nature, it does not differ in time but in being born later. These orders do not prevent them from being synonymous, as long as this is in their very nature and definition. Just as in accidents, the definition of being is prior, but in essence, it is later, in this causing, in the accident being caused; thus it seems to Aristotle and truth that essence is prior in nature, knowledge, and time to accident, but not otherwise than the same essence or that accident.

63. To make the argument about numbers clearer, every number is some quantity, and thus it is impossible for it to be composed of non-quantities in any way; there is no necessity that just as it is a quantity in actuality and in itself, so also the things of which it is composed, but it suffices that these participate in the nature of the quantity without division. Most of all, the parts as certain principles and materials of the number, the units, though separate from each other, are indivisible in themselves, are prior to the number composed of them; for always the components are prior to the composite, and the parts to the whole; but they are not synonymous with the number; nor are they quantities, except in potentiality; nor are they primarily in the genus, except by analogy, as matter and form in essence, and differences in each genus, and as the point in quantity, and generally the elements and principles. That such things are not primarily in the genus, but only the form and the individual, is evident to anyone with any share in logical thinking; no number is a part of a number in itself, except accidentally, in that the units making up a specific number, combined with other units in some way, produce a specific number greater than the former, so in the greater number, the lesser number is potentially, and becomes actual when separated; but a specific number cannot be part of another specific number in itself and in actuality, so it cannot be prior; thus, three considered in itself is a specific number, and thus it does not differ from six in being prior; both have the concept of number equally, both being specific numbers; nor is it necessary for three to be prior in the generation of six, but rather the three units and the power of the dyad, as six comes from these. In truth, this is not necessary, but six units are necessary, or to the number composed of five units, another unit added, and produce another number form. So three, considered in itself, as has been said, is neither prior nor at the same time, but in six it is not a specific number, but rather the matter of six, which composed of three, or three times two units, has the form resulting from such composition. Thus, three is prior to six; but it is not a specific number of another such, but as the parts of the whole and the components of the composite. The parts as principles, thus they are not synonymous due to the aforementioned reasons; they have the same concept of number and exist simultaneously.

64. The same reasoning applies almost to the simple bodies; for the simple bodies, which many call elements, are in the same genus as the composite bodies, which is body, and even higher is essence. Therefore, they have the same concept of genus in specific difference and are, in a sense, synonymous; for the simple and composite bodies have the same manner of being universally, which is to exist in themselves; and this manner of existence, being one, creates the unity of the concept, which is the most general genus, essence. The unity of the concept is not hindered by some bodies being simple and others composite, just as in the simple bodies themselves, the difference of more perfect and less perfect does not divide the concept of essence; for fire is more perfect than air, and so on in order; but fire and air are nonetheless bodies and essences. Nor is the concept of essence prior in the simple bodies than in those composed of them, which are also bodies and essences in some sense. For existing in themselves and having and preserving accidents in them is not more in the composites because of the simples, nor in the simples because of them, but is in each of them in themselves, and both alike and simultaneously have this concept by which they are distinguished from accidents. As Aristotle also says in the fourth book of Metaphysics: "Essence is said of the simple bodies, such as earth, fire, and water, and all such, and generally bodies, and those composed of them, living beings and demons, and their parts; all these are called essence because they are not said of a subject, but other things are said of them." Thus, the bodies and essences are the so-called elements, synonymous with the composites and are simultaneously existing; but the simples are prior to the composites. This does not destroy the synonymy, as was said about numbers, but finding the common concept in one primarily, and in another through the former by participation, does not allow the latter to be said synonymously, just as participating in the essence by itself in the concept of being, and through it also giving this to the accident, makes the essence prior to the accident, or the essence itself and the accident of it.

65. It is clear that the primarily synonymous must be specific. Therefore, I agree that the simple bodies and those composed of them are synonymous, but as specific, since there is no prior and later in the concept of essence in them, as was said; and as they are in the composites as their elements (let it be said so), I do not say they are synonymous, but in the way it is said of any element and any principle; and it is clear that, being in the composite, they are potentially specific. When they are separated, they have this actually and are specific. Then one should inquire whether they equally and in themselves admit the category of essence or one through the other; so it is clear from what has been said, that the simple bodies, as bodies, are synonymous with the composites; but they are not prior to them in being essences, even if they are prior in being simple, while the others are composite; and as principles of the composites, they are in them, neither specific but only in potentiality, nor synonymous essences.

66. Thus, the objections from whiteness, numbers, and elements are not true, nor do they disturb the Aristotelian arguments about being, which is said analogically; they rather confirm them. Let this suffice for now.

67. What Aristotle says about being and one would be clear if we explain it with his exact words in the problems about genus; there he says it is a mistake if someone says that genus is what follows all; for there are more things that follow all, such as being and one, which follow everything. If being is given as a genus, it is clear that it would be a genus of everything since it is predicated of them, but genus is predicated only of species; thus, one would be a species of being. It follows that what is predicated of the genus is also

predicated of the species. Since being and one are predicated of everything universally, the species should be predicated to a lesser extent.

68. Thus, the Philosopher asserts that it is impossible for a genus to exist that is not counter-predicated by another, to have the opposition of the risible for Plethon; but he says that what follows everything cannot be a genus. And if someone were to say this, they would be speaking poorly indeed; for what follows everything is not only one thing but multiple; for instance, being, one, good, perfect, and such. If someone were to take one of these and say it is a genus of everything because it follows all, it would also be a genus of the others that follow all, and they would be species of it; and thus, since they follow all, and are species of that which follows all, they will be predicated equally as species and genus. But it is impossible for genus and species to be predicated equally; for genus must be predicated of more.

69. These being thus said by Aristotle, what Plethon asserts against him becomes more in his favor. For if the ability to move is counter-predicated to animal, nothing prevents animal from being a genus; just as man does not cease to be a species of individual men because the risible is counter-predicated to it. But if one is counter-predicated to being, it very much prevents being from being a genus because animal and the ability to move do not follow all things, nor man and the risible; but being and one follow all things, and therefore the said absurdity follows if someone claims being to be a genus; it is because what is predicated of the genus is also predicated of the species; this absurdity does not follow with animal and the ability to move; for if animal is predicated of the ability to move, it is not predicated as a genus of that species, but as itself in itself, as it is with all things counter-predicated; it would be said as a species if animal followed all, and was predicated as a genus; which is what those around Plato assert about being.

70. Since Aristotle attacks those who say genus is what follows all and directs his proofs towards this, if Plethon had raised objections from some things that follow all, it would have been just; now, however, he risks either understanding nothing of what Aristotle says, or seeming to be a deliberate slanderer, by objecting from animal and the ability to move, which do not follow all; or thirdly, to be judged completely ignorant of the rules of dialectics. Therefore, being is not a genus for the reason mentioned; but he says it is something common and universal, said of all both being and one; "For," he says, "being and one are equally said and predicated universally of all." And in the twentieth book of Metaphysics, he says: "It makes no difference whether the reduction of beings to one or to being is made; for even if they are not the same, but different, they are counter-predicated; for both one and being somehow, and being and one." He says they are different, as they differ in definition; for it has the addition of being indivisible; but as counter-predicated, it makes no difference whether it is said to be common to all beings and one. If Plethon wants this exception for the highest genus, that it is not counter-predicated by species, he himself would not use the term genus properly, and Aristotle considers being something common and universally predicated of all but not partaking of the concept of genus, which everything that is to be a genus must properly partake of. Furthermore, the syllogism in the twentieth book of Metaphysics about being and one, proving they cannot be genera, is appropriately and demonstratively applied to the laws concerning these by Aristotle; for he says: "If being and one are posited as genera, the differences must partake of them; but no difference partakes of the genus; therefore, they should not be posited as genera." That no difference partakes of the genus, he shows best in the tenth book of Metaphysics, explaining the concept of genus: "For," he says, "I call such a thing a genus which is said to be one and the same in both, not by accident having a difference; not only must the common

exist, as both are animals, but also something else in each of them, as one is a horse, the other a human. Therefore, this difference must be otherness of the genus; for I call the difference of genus otherness, or making it other in itself." Since otherness of the genus is by itself the difference, how can it partake of it? For nothing partakes of what it is other and different from. If, as he says in the fourth book of Topics: "The definition of partaking is to accept the definition of what is partaken of, and what is partaken of to be a part of the definition of what partakes," and neither of these fits the difference to the genus, how can it partake of it? It is clear that being rational is to have reason; this has nothing in common with being an animal, even if having reason follows from being an animal. Additionally, if the difference is taken from the form and the genus from the matter, the form is not enclosed in the substance of the matter, but the matter is rather potential to the form; thus, the difference must not belong to the nature of the genus, but the genus contains the difference only in potentiality; and it is evident that no difference can be taken that does not include being and one in its concept.

71. Given these considerations, if someone wishes to call being a genus homonymously, let them do so; for the Philosopher also does not honor being and one with the designation of genus, understanding genus there as something common and universally said of all. If one wishes to call it synonymous in such a way that the entire concept of genus is fully present in it and actually exists for all that it covers, as is the case with primarily held genera, how is it not false to say that it is not necessary for everything that applies to subordinate genera to apply to the highest genus? This is nothing other than positing a genus that allows itself not to be a genus, and thus conflating contradiction, making everything at once, and truly transgressing the methods of reasoning. On the contrary, it is necessary for everything that applies to subordinate genera to also apply to the highest genus, if animal is not more a genus than body, nor body more than essence; these are different in other respects, but essence is superior to all, and all genera are synonymous.

72. But as it seems, Plethon, assuming being to be a specific principle, forces these points; but it has already been demonstrated that this is impossible and that it is impractical for something to be both a specific principle and a genus simultaneously. If someone wishes to make an exception for being, saying it is a genus and does not have the properties inherent to a genus, they dishonor it rather than honor it, considering it an imperfect genus; even if it were possible for something to be truly a genus without the properties inherently belonging to a genus, it would not surpass other genera but fall short, lacking the properties derived from the completeness of genera; for a genus must have all properties. Plethon is mistaken, thinking that when rationality is the difference of animal, it means to have reason. From this, he considers it not absurd to predicate animal of rationality, just as it is not absurd to say this of man if man is an animal and rational; but it is not so; for man is said to be rational paronymously, as an animal; rationality is the difference of animal, meaning to have reason or to use reason. Just as having reason is not an animal, so rational, which means to have reason, is not; this is the difference of animal. Whether it is considered a quality or a form, just as it is impossible to predicate matter of form, so it is for genus to be predicated of difference; for form is not matter, nor is the composite; but form with matter makes the composite; and what the composite is, is both form and matter; whether it is considered a part of the thing, just as one would not call the hand or head a man, so having reason cannot rightly be called an animal or man, but placing having reason paronymously with animal, one would call it man, as it is that which has reason along with many other things, above all.

73. It is evident to everyone that the difference can be considered a part of the genus potentially and of the species actually. Thus, it is clear that rational is the difference of animal when it divides animal, and is beyond the essence of animal. If anyone predicates animal of rational, if as rationality, they would make a false predication; for it is not true to predicate composites of simples in this way, but rather rationality is of animal or man; evidently, it is otherness; it is an essential difference or passion of man. We do not need to examine this in detail now. If it is considered as rationality, it would be predicated accidentally and not primarily, however it may be in man to be rational. Plethon, thinking Aristotle caught if rational were the difference of animal, fabricates rationality, and we fabricate animality in response. The Philosopher is far from seeking such evasions, who does not use animality and rationality instead of genus and difference; rather, using animality as genus would be entirely impossible if Plethon did not similarly err; but he never uses animality for anything, nor rationality as difference. If it seems that animality and animal are the same, and if animality is the genus, and rationality and rational the difference, there is still a great difference; for animal signifies something composite, even if genus; but animality is simple; and as such, they are certain principles of conceptualizations, not the conceptualizations themselves; for instance, rationality is not a difference but rather a principle of difference; and animality is not a genus but a principle of genus; for animality is what makes something an animal, and rationality what makes it rational; just as humanity is what makes someone a human, and likewise for other things.

74. That genera and species are somehow composite is evident from this: for the subordinate genus is composed of genus and difference, and every genus is defined by some opposing differences to the species, being composite itself for this reason; species, in turn, are even more composite, including such things as these. Thus, it is clear that rationality and rational, or animal and animality, are different as mentioned; the dialectical laws apply their respective conceptualizations to animal, rational, and human, not to rationality and similar things, using the former universally; and these as principles they omit. For, they say, the universal is to be predicated; what is predicated must be a whole; thus, animal, rational, and human are such. These alone they say are universal, genus evidently, species, and difference; and these are predicated of their subordinates, rational and animal of human, and human of the individual. They do not say rationality of human or animality, nor should rationality be predicated of humanity, or animality of rationality; none of these is universal or a whole in any way. However, it is not within the scope or need of the present discussion to speak of these in detail; it suffices to say that whether one speaks of rationality, rational, animal, or animality, one must always ensure to predicate genus of species, and difference paronymously, but not genus of difference due to the aforementioned reasons, except as one can predicate a subject of an attribute, but not properly. From all this it is clear that superordinates are predicated synonymously of subordinates and participated in by them; but the difference in the categorical arrangement is not directly under the genus; it is not a species, but rather a principle of the species, existing potentially earlier in the genus, as all others and Porphyry think, and therefore the genus is not predicated of it.

75. Plethon can thus be adequately answered in general; but the main reasons why being seems to be a synonymous genus are these. Since the contrary of one power must be of one definition, and the primary contrary of intellect is being, it follows that being must be of one definition, and therefore synonymous. That being is primarily opposed to the intellect is evident from what Aristotle says in the prefaces of the Physics, that the more confused are more knowable and first known of all other things; and the most confused is one

because it extends to many. Moreover, when I say: rational is being, or I apply being to rational by the definition of essence and accident, or by a more general definition; if the latter, I have the premise that being is of one definition towards both essence and accident; if by the definition of essence, or that of accident, impossibilities follow. For if by the definition of accident, rational would be an accident, and yet it is in the genus of essence; if by the definition of essence, this also seems impossible; for if one were to truly assert rational to be essence, with essence being genus, and rational a difference, it follows that genus is predicated of difference; but this is impossible according to Aristotle in the sixth book of Topics and the third book of Metaphysics; there he says genus cannot be predicated of difference in itself, and the reason for this is sufficiently given. It remains, then, that being is predicated of rational by a more general definition; it is thus of one definition towards both essence and accident; and what is said of some things by one definition in themselves is said synonymously of them; thus, being is synonymous.

76. But it is not difficult to refute these arguments, which are more active than those Plethon has sophistically devised, by using the principles previously stated. Plethon, by conceding, will be shown inferior to those able to refute, or by refuting, will unwittingly support Aristotle, as previously stated.

77. Thirdly, Plethon claims that Aristotle errs in calling individual essence the primary essence and greater essence, and lesser and secondary, the genera and species of essences. For it makes no difference whether one says all man or all men; it is the same to say all men and each of all men, so it makes no difference to say all man and each of the individual men; therefore, the individual men are not more essence than all man. Individual men are partial essences, and all man is a universal essence; therefore, primary essence is not more essence than secondary and universal essence.

78. Furthermore, the being of each comes from the primary cause, just as the universal; it is evident that the primary cause makes the individual through the universal, and not vice versa, as Plato asserts; what something is made for is more honorable than what is made for it; thus, the primary essence is not more honorable, and consequently not more being.

79. Moreover, the science of the universal is better than that of the particular, as Aristotle himself says in the Posterior Analytics. Better in being better; thus, the universal is better than the particular.

80. Furthermore, the universal is to the particular as the whole to the part; the whole is greater than the part, and consequently more honorable; and therefore, the universal is more honorable than the particular.

81. But Aristotle's principle suffices for the contrary. We must understand that Plato posited genera and species, and generally universals, to be separate from particulars not only in thought but also in existence. He claimed that such things have specific causes for both the being and knowing of particulars, thus considering them more honorable than particulars simply, as being eternal and causes of transient and corruptible things. This position is illogical for many reasons, particularly in the following logical manner: firstly, the corruptible and the incorruptible do not belong to the same genus, at least not in the natural order. If the universals were separate from the sensibles in being, they would be incorruptible both in themselves and incidentally, whereas the particulars are corruptible in themselves; thus, the particulars and their genera and species would not belong to the same category or the same genus, which is impossible; for the genus and species of every individual must belong to the same genus and category. Additionally, if genera and species, said as what they are of the particulars, signify something essentially belonging to them, and what belongs essentially to something cannot be separated from it, if the essence cannot be separated from what it is the essence of, the

species and genera would not be separate from the particulars in being. It is evident that neither for the being nor the knowing of particulars is it necessary to posit the universals as separate. If they are forms and immovable according to Plato, they could not make known movement and matter; our mind knows sensibles through a certain similarity to universals; it is impossible for the movable to have similarity to the immovable, or the material to the immaterial in themselves; thus, such universals would not cause knowledge but rather ignorance; natural science and the demonstration from moving and material causes would be abolished. Nor is it necessary to posit forms for the generation of sensibles; it suffices that the universal, by arranging matter in a certain way, leads the forms of sensibles, with the nature receptive to the forms; it can extend the power of matter and lead it to actuality, without any external example, but by the sole moving of the first cause; whose activity through the universal agent extends to all particulars and assimilates them to itself as one common form of all; how could material things proceed from immaterial forms? If the universal agent sufficed for their generation, one could not easily see why without attributing the power of the first mover to the forms themselves; thus, either the first principle is not one, or the forms are superfluous and posited in vain.

82. Plato seems to have adopted such an opinion about universals, refuted in this way. More substantial and effective arguments can refute this opinion for someone willing to undertake it. Aristotle posits certain separate essences, but he does not claim these are the forms of sensibles, nor that they are universals; rather, he says these move the cosmos and are causes of beings and becoming in another way. Universals, which the intellect produces by abstraction from particulars, are also specific principles of particulars, existing in them in actuality, and causes of their knowledge, because the intellect knows sensibles and particulars through a certain return to them. He considered the nature of the intellect sufficient to make the images taken from sensibles actually intelligible and universal, and therefore thought it unnecessary to seek some action of higher bodies or an influx of separate forms into the human mind, as Plato posited.

83. He considered it necessary to understand by abstraction because the human intellect is an activity of its association with the body, yet united with it as a power of the soul, the entelechy of the body; it is impossible for a bodily thing to act on the incorporeal, nor can it know anything except through a form, which would fall to the knowing power as some similarity to the known. If the intellect were not united with the body in any way, it would be necessary to think it knowing through separate essences, and there would be no need to separate, but it would suffice only to participate in the separate. For these reasons, in the seventh book of Metaphysics, Aristotle says universals are neither essences nor principles of the being of particulars insofar as they are predicated of many, when they truly hold the concept of universal; nor are they separate from the particulars, except in thought; but as they exist in actuality in particulars, they are essential parts of them and exist in actuality because of this, as only these exist in themselves in actuality. Therefore, they are essences in actuality, not holding the concept of universal, but rather that of part; their universal concept accompanies them, neither existing in themselves nor being better than the particulars existing in themselves and in actuality in appearances. Given this, how could they be better and more honorable than the particulars simply, except in some way, in that they evidently hold some similarity to the principle of beings, or are by nature eternal? For the forms of things remain incorruptible in nature through successive generation and in our minds through abstraction, and they are causes of knowledge in us, being first made by the intellect; as if they were not made thus, the beings could not otherwise act upon our intellect. They are better than sensibles

and particulars in this respect, but inferior in all others for not being superior to corruption in themselves nor acting externally on our intellect, being only certain conceptual entities and perpetually carried by the potentiality of matter, not much superior even in these except by some similarity to the best.

84. Such a view on species and genera, and generally on universals, has prevailed from Aristotle. In responding to Plethon, who criticizes Aristotle here, regarding the first argument, we say that the Philosopher, comparing each individual essence with the universal, claims it to be more of an essence than the latter, such as Socrates being more of an essence than simply man. In saying this, he does not refer to the being of these essences but to the activity of being a subject and existing. Therefore, the concept of essence is taken, as he says in the seventh book of Metaphysics, "Essence is not said of a subject but that of which the others are said." Thus, the primary essence, being a subject to more things, is said to be more of an essence. It is evident that to whatever the genus and species are subject, the individual is subject to all these and even more; and in being, there is no difference to be found in the essences themselves; all are one thing essentially, preserving the order of subject and predicate within each other, giving the same existence to both superordinates and subordinates, if they are in the same category. I do not now speak about their separation or not and how they might be separated.

85. This is the Philosopher's aim there; but in Plethon's argument, the primary essence is nowhere compared to the secondary, but individual men to all men. This makes no difference to comparing the secondary essence to itself; for all individual men together are all man; and something confusedly is supposed through both alike. Instead of saying individual men, one should rather say each man, to suggest something distinguished and signifying the primary essence. It makes a great difference to speak confusedly and to speak precisely; moreover, according to Aristotle, all man is not the secondary essence but man; the term all signifies the manner of predication, that the term is predicated universally; thus, the whole argument is neither true nor sophistical. What is said about the universal does not at all support the argument, being entirely irrelevant and empty noise, and should not be deemed worthy of a refutation from us.

86. Regarding the second argument, since both genus and species are said to be universal, nature does nothing for the sake of the genus; for the end of generation is the species, and the genus is compared to the species as a material principle, taken from the material in the thing, and matter exists for the sake of the species; it is clear that if nature produces for one of these, it produces for the species, not for the genus. But nature does not produce entirely for the sake of the species either. Even if the species is the ultimate aim of nature, desiring the species to remain unperished in the succession of individuals, in making each individual, it defines its specific activity in the individual characteristics, in which the species is enclosed; the individual is nothing other than the species itself enclosed in individual characteristics. If the species were separate from the particulars, things would be produced by God for its sake, or they would be either subsequent to the sensibles or made for some benefit to them. Since that is shown to be impossible and the species must be preserved in the particulars, things are made by God for the sake of the individuals, not the species; the generation of individuals is the preservation of the species. Truly, God's aim is not directed at the species; it is nothing apart from the particulars; but towards His own eternity, through which the nature of corruptible things reaches some likeness to His eternity and goodness. This continuity of the species follows from the unceasing generation, which means the species remains eternally, the eternal generation of the particulars. The generation of one individual aims at the preservation of the species, inferior as it exists for the sake of

the species; and if one individual is inferior to many at once and those ceasing to exist at some point, much more would it be inferior to those continuously generated, never ceasing to exist, itself ceasing to exist at some point. The species itself, as it exists in the individual, would not be inferior to the individual, unless one would say the potential is simply more honorable than the actual, the part than the whole, the effect than the cause; thus, the species is related to the particular, being a part evidently inferior to it. Because the species is whole in one individual and is also a part of it, it could be preserved in one immortal individual, no less than in the perishable ones, existing unceasingly in them, each succeeding the other; it is posterior not only as a universal but also simply, if it were for its sake that the particular was made, even if the species cannot be said to be universal and the form in any particular, these being true, we refrain from demonstrating their truth due to the present need, and what has been said is more than enough. But to respond to the second argument, it suffices to say logically that the first essence exists through the second; something produced for the sake of another does not add anything to the one for whose sake it is produced; thus, the individual essence exists more as a subject than the universal, as it is subject to more things, being more of an essence for this reason; the Philosopher defines essence as being a subject and not predicated of a subject because it is that by which others exist.

87. Regarding the third argument, a science is better than another science in two ways, as the Philosopher shows in the preface to the De Anima: either in essence, that is, in its object, or in quality; this would be the method of the science, for instance, building is better than making a bed because a house is better than a bed; constructing well is better than constructing poorly because a well-made house is better than a poorly made one. These two qualities do not always coincide; sometimes, where there is superiority in the object, there is less precision, and vice versa, as with geometry and astronomy; where the superior science is simply the one with the superior subject. Therefore, the science of the universal might be better than that of the particular in precision, not in the worth of the subject. This is true in comparing two sciences, where one to the other is like the universal to the particular, with the subject of the one included in the other with some addition, making it a different number, as in arithmetic and harmony; also, the same conclusion is better known by one knowing it through universal premises than by one knowing it through particular premises; but there is no science of the particular, only sensation. Science is primarily of universals alone, as Aristotle thinks, and indirectly of particulars and through a certain return. These are the arguments in the Posterior Analytics, but one does not know the same thing better by knowing it as a universal than as a particular; on the contrary, knowing something as a universal is more confused and indefinite; knowing it as a particular is to know it more definitively and clearly, as the Philosopher says in the preface to the Physics, likening the knowledge of children, who indiscriminately call all men fathers; but as time progresses, they perfect their knowledge and distinguish. For instance, knowing Socrates approaching as Socrates is better than knowing him as a man; still less knowing him as an animal, if one is to know truly who Socrates is; for Socrates is both an animal and a man and whatever else is predicated truly of him. Thus, as actuality is more honorable than potentiality, and the definite than the indefinite, so the particular is more honorable than the universal; and the knowledge of the particular is more honorable than that of the universal in the same and one thing. Thus, Aristotle is far from being ignorant of himself or asserting inconsistencies.

88. But those who examine without dividing each part are more ignorant of Aristotle and the truth itself; for the science of the universal is better than that of the particular, and the universal's, than the particular's, as

stated in the Posterior Analytics; and the particular is again more honorable than the universal and better in itself and in its actual existence, even if the universal is better in terms of its relation to science, as being more intelligible; otherwise, these are compared as we consider them, and otherwise, they exist in themselves. These must be shown to be consistent with themselves in Aristotle's view.

89. To resolve the argument, it suffices to say that Aristotle places the primary essence before the secondary in categories not by the reasoning of part and whole, but by the fact that it is neither said of a subject nor in a subject, but is itself the subject of all, as he rightly claims. For if essence, as he says in the fourth book of Metaphysics, is that which is not said of a subject but that of which others are said, that is, what is subject to and exists for others, and this is the specific definition of essence, and the primary essence, being an individual, is subject to all and in no way a subject, it is evident that it would be more of an essence. For among things that share a common property, named from that common property, that in which this common property is most inherent would be most appropriately named after it.

90. Regarding the fourth argument, the continuous whole and the universal whole are alike in that each contains more, or is in more and composed of more; they differ in the manner of their being. In the continuous whole, the part is in actuality, like the hand in the body; in the universal whole, the part is in potentiality, like the species in the genus. Again, the continuous whole is not in any of its parts in itself, whereas the universal is in each of its subordinates in itself and is in actuality in them, being part of their very essence. The continuous whole is simply greater than the part because it contains simply; the universal whole is compared as both a whole and a part to the lesser common; it is a whole as not only containing itself but also others, as under the animal is not only man but also horse; it is a part as contained with others in the concept of the lesser common, as man contains in the concept of animal and rational; therefore, it is a whole in theory, its nature being the concept of the whole, following our understanding by abstraction; it is a part in being, since it is contained in actuality in the particulars, having existence only in this way. These are not difficult to show as true, refuting Plato's errors about universals; the prior points in resolving this and the second question suffice. Therefore, it is not necessary that if the continuous whole is more honorable than its part, the universal whole is also more honorable than what it contains; they are not entirely alike, so not everything is the same in both; on the contrary, it is more true that the particular or lesser universal is more honorable than the greater universal, as it contains and is greater in actuality and work. If, as Plethon says, the greater and containing must be more honorable, Socrates contains man in actuality and existence, being contained by it in concept, and as existing in the superior reality of existence and greater in this, it is more honorable. That being in reality is better than being in thought and simply the being of the thing surpasses by much the being in the mind, is clear, and needs no proof; the argument about the true idea of man adds nothing, nor does it endanger Socrates being more honorable; he neither contains it nor is contained by it, but only has its likeness, being generated according to it without hindrance, not comparing it more to its creative cause than it to him, both united in the divine intellect; Socrates does not touch that idea, nor do we predicate it of him, nor do we know him through it, but as the form and the universal are said of Socrates and everything else by Aristotle and should be said, as previously discussed.

91. The main reasons why the secondary essence might seem more of an essence than the primary are these. Firstly, that which contains no accident must be more of an essence than that which contains some accident, as being wholly free from accident. It is clear that the secondary essence has this; neither animal nor

man contains an accident, being secondary essences; only the primary contains individualizing accidents. Secondly, according to the Philosopher in the third book of Topics, that for the sake of which something exists is more real; the primary essence exists for the sake of the secondary, therefore the secondary is more real than the primary. That the primary exists for the sake of the secondary is clear when we say that all man is an essence, but a particular man is a man; given these, we rightly conclude that a particular man is an essence, using the secondary essence as the middle term and cause; thus, it is evident that the secondary essence is the cause for the primary being an essence.

BOOK TWO AGAINST PLETHON

3. Book Two.

1. Up to this point, it was most pleasing for me to refute Plethon, as he seemed to be moved by some reasonable argument, and it was likely that those who encounter this work of mine would also find it most enjoyable to read. However, the criticisms that follow against a philosopher such as him are of such a nature that they might cause hesitation not only to me, as I argue against him, but also to those who wish to pause and consider whether there is anything worthy of doubt in his claims. For this reason, I have allowed these arguments to be trusted by the foolish and ignorant—those whom we cannot help in any way, given their disposition—while he himself, being worse off precisely because he thinks he knows, is refuted by these very arguments. For the falsehoods and impossibilities in his claims are so evident that they stand refuted from the outset, requiring no one to bring refutations against them. Nevertheless, having set out to examine his entire work thoroughly, I consider it necessary to grant myself the satisfaction of not abandoning this task for any reason, especially out of the goodwill I hold toward Aristotle and the truth. The refutation of the remaining points will be brief, for why should one spend more time refuting what ought to have been entirely dismissed from the start?

2. Plethon, therefore, takes issue with Aristotle, claiming that Aristotle asserts the universal corresponds to matter, while the particular corresponds to form. He then presents arguments to refute this view, which he attributes to Aristotle. For my part, I will remain silent regarding whether these arguments sufficiently oppose the view, even if it were indeed Aristotle's, or whether they do not. I leave it to those who are more than capable to examine and refute these matters without hesitation. Instead, I assert that Aristotle is being slandered by Plethon. For Aristotle does not establish such an order of genus and species in relation to their opposites, nor does he say that the species stands in relation to the genus in the manner of a formative principle. Rather, he says that the species under the genus is likened to the composite form, arising from matter analogous to the genus and from the form of the difference. That the universal corresponds to matter and the particular to the form that shapes matter—nowhere could Plethon demonstrate that Aristotle says this. Instead, Plethon slanders him from his own imagination. That Aristotle says the genus is analogous to matter and the difference to form, from which the rational species is composed, is clear both from his works On Dialectic and On First Philosophy. For everywhere he calls the genus "matter" and the difference "form," "contrariety," "quality," and "formative," as that which produces the species in relation to the genus, not in relation to matter, and which stands in an analogous relationship to the natural thing. No one, I think, who knows Aristotle would be ignorant of this, except Plethon himself. For this reason, there is no need to bring forward Aristotle's own words here. But Porphyry, that outstanding follower of Plato, in his work On the Five Predicables, interprets Aristotle in a way directly opposed to Plethon, considering it entirely inappropriate to slander such a man. For he says that just as things composed of matter and form, or having a constitution analogous to matter and form—like a statue composed of bronze as matter and shape as form —so too the common and specific man is composed of matter analogous to the genus and form from the difference. The whole, "rational mortal animal, man," is like the statue. Porphyry sufficiently testifies to Aristotle in this regard, where he speaks of those who follow him. But if Plethon were to say that in this passage Porphyry neither follows Plato nor speaks falsely of Aristotle, even though he intended to align himself most closely with the Peripatetics or failed to see how they might properly agree, and that he did not

understand Aristotle, this would indeed be a marvel. But I think that if anyone wished to absolve Plethon of the charge of slander, they would say that he was misled by the ambiguity of the term "form." For in one sense, "form" refers to the substantial, which depends on matter as that which defines, perfects, and enters into it, insofar as it is in pure potentiality. In another sense, it refers to what is analogous to this but accidental, which enters into the composite and actual being, such as whiteness or the quality of being white. Both of these are referred to the underlying subject. In yet another sense, "form" is spoken of as it relates to the genus. It is also spoken of in other ways, but these are the primary senses, and it suffices to mention them here.

3. Of the earlier philosophers, the natural philosopher is most concerned with theoretical matters, while the logician concerns himself with the third kind of inquiry, which revolves around what underlies and is predicated in this or that way, as is fitting for a logician. Therefore, since the genus is analogous to matter, especially when it is confused and indeterminate, the difference is analogous to form. For it is the nature of form to distinguish and divide, as is said in the ninth book of the Metaphysics. By "form," I mean the natural form. The difference distinguishes and separates the species within the same genus from one another. That which is composed of genus and difference, which is the definition, the essence, and the form of the thing—for all these are convertible—is analogous to what is composed of matter and form. In saying this, Aristotle speaks most excellently and in a manner consistent with his other teachings, and no one of sound mind would object. The genus, as matter, receives the difference as form according to the analogy in natural things, but not the form that is logically predicated of it. For that resembles what is composed of matter and form. There is a great difference between saying this and saying that the universal is analogous to matter and the particular to form. Aristotle is not so ignorant as to assert such a thing. For the universal signifies both genus and species, while the particular signifies either the less universal or the individual, and the truth about each of these is different. Since the difference is not part of the genus, nor is it subsumed under it, nor does it participate in it, as has been demonstrated in earlier arguments, for these reasons Aristotle abstained from such claims, and the one who slanders him as a wise man, or thinks that Aristotle held such views, would never escape the charges of malice and ignorance before just judges.

4. In addition to this, Plethon praises the second property that Aristotle assigns to relational things (τὰ πρός τι) but criticizes him for seemingly undermining this property with an objection. For after saying, Plethon claims, that relational things exist simultaneously by nature, Aristotle wrongly adds that the sensible can exist in time prior to sensation. Plethon argues that it is impossible for something to be sensible if there is no sensation of it, nor any possibility of sensation. Therefore, if the sensation of something is possible, then that thing is potentially sensible, and it is simultaneously potentially sensible even if the actual sensation of it does not yet exist, and the potential sensation of it does not yet exist in actuality under sensation. And again, when one of the two exists in actuality, the other also exists in actuality, and both exist simultaneously in actuality, with neither being prior or posterior to the other. This is Plethon's argument, and while he does not slander Aristotle here as he does elsewhere, he accuses him in vain. For the Philosopher (Aristotle) here too speaks truthfully and in a manner worthy of his great intellect. After adding to the properties of relational things that they exist simultaneously by nature, he raises an objection based on knowledge, sensation, and the things referred to them. This objection is not a rejection of the property but rather a kind of clarification and a rule for understanding in which cases this property should be applied and in which cases

it should not. For it seemed to some that this property applied to all relational things. Just as, then, in his discussions on substance, he assigns certain properties to substance—some fitting the primary substance, others the secondary substances, and others universally accompanying all substances—since he thought it right to divide substance into primary and secondary, so too, when relational things are divided universally into two kinds, he does not assign the same properties to both parts. Rather, he says that all relational things are spoken of as correlative, but not all have contrariety—for example, relational things referred to quantity do not have contrariety—nor do all exist simultaneously by nature in such a way that when one exists, either potentially or actually, the other must also exist in the same way. Only those relational things that have a mutual order and are equally related to one another, depending on each other in a real way, coexist and are simultaneously true. For of relational things, some are referred by their being, others by their being spoken of as having a relation, and he assigns a distinct account to each. Those referred by their being, which are properly relational, have the same account of relation on both sides and are similarly ordered toward one another, as each exists in the substance of the other, and such things exist simultaneously by nature—that is, they have the relational character simultaneously, as in the case of double and half, master and slave, father and son, and the like. But those that do not have this kind of relation, being far removed from the genus of those relational things to which such an order applies, are rightly devoid of that property and do not exist simultaneously by nature, as is the case with the examples from which the objection arises. For the knowable and the sensible can exist potentially, even if the things said to be related to them exist neither potentially nor actually. For example, if it happened that there were no animal, either actually or potentially, there would also be no knowledge or sensation, either potentially or actually. Yet the knowable can still exist potentially, as in the conception of a stone, even if the stone exists. Similarly, the sensible can exist potentially, such as sweetness or bitterness. And even when the knower exists, there is a certain order of the soul toward the knowable, since the soul is improved by the impression from it. But such a knowable is entirely unaffected by the activity of the intellect, undergoing no change when it is thought. For this reason, the order of sensation and knowledge toward the sensible and the knowable exists in the substance of sensation and knowledge, but there is no order of the sensible and the knowable toward sensation and knowledge. However, it is not necessary here to divide relational things precisely according to Aristotle's guidance. It suffices to say this much: the Philosopher does not undermine the property of relational things by first assigning it universally to all and then, as if regretting it, taking it back. Rather, since relational things are universally divided into two kinds—according to being and according to being spoken of—and again into another division, where some have a mutual order of things and others are related only from one side to the other, he demonstrates well through his objection in which cases this property should be understood to apply. For it did not seem to him wise to assert that this account applies universally to all relational things, and he was persuaded by the dissimilarity in the order of the aforementioned examples. Whether this is sufficiently and fittingly demonstrated by the arguments he presents, I cannot say. For I know that even Aristotle does not always insist on absolute precision and necessity in such matters. Yet, since it is true and can be demonstrated by irrefutable arguments, even if the Philosopher does not greatly emphasize this, considering the objection and its immediate explanation sufficient to show that coexistence and simultaneous truth do not apply equally to all relational things, this suffices. These are the things Aristotle distinguishes in the Categories concerning

relational things, and from these, Plethon's argument is also refuted, since his objection is based not on conceptions but on the realities underlying the conceptions.

5. Plethon also claims that Aristotle undermines the principle of contradiction in his assertion that an indefinite contradiction can be simultaneously true, so that there exists some contradiction that is simultaneously true. Aristotle, however, held that a contradiction can never be simultaneously true and that this is false. For the indefinite contradiction is equivalent to a universal negation, which does not coincide with a particular negation, since the negation is of a particular affirmation, to which the universal negation is opposed. These are the criticisms that Plethon and all the followers of Plato level against Aristotle. But while they bring forward many arguments, which are easy to refute, Plethon relies on a single argument and appeals primarily to the common use of the term.

6. To think that Aristotle undermines the principle of contradiction, to which he devoted so much effort, establishing it as a universal principle and defending it in many wise arguments throughout the Metaphysics against those who do not easily accept such a principle, is utterly ridiculous. Rather, one might suppose that Plethon, persuaded by many wise men, does not understand Aristotle, than that Aristotle, persuaded by Plethon and a few others, could fall into such an error. I leave aside the fact that they should not have accused Aristotle for these reasons. For if he contradicts himself by saying these things, and yet says that some contradiction is simultaneously true, this might perhaps be the kind of contradiction he thought he was affirming, speaking truthfully and in agreement with himself. In that case, he would neither be contradicting himself wrongly nor justly deserve criticism. But let those who wish to mock Plethon say these things. For my part, I will speak the truth about these matters. The Philosopher (Aristotle) is accustomed to naming the specific and the less universal with the names of genera and more general terms, and to calling things that seem to be a "this something" according to the prevailing opinion about them, until, having distinguished the truth from appearances, he assigns the appropriate term to each. And if this creates some obscurity in his arguments, let Plethon think what he will. For my part, I praise Aristotle for this, knowing that he deliberately and rightly chooses this approach, especially where it is most necessary, and that there is no obscurity in his works for those who are well-versed in philosophy and listen with goodwill. In general, if each person were to think about Aristotle as they think about themselves, without slandering or envying him at all, they would find nothing amiss in his work. Indeed, they might even wish to err in philosophy as Aristotle is thought to have erred according to Plethon. And to the extent that Aristotle's deliberate use of obscurity is wiser and more beneficial than that of all his predecessors, this is clear to everyone, and I have already spoken briefly about it in the introduction.

7. But what Aristotle says about indefinite propositions, whether clearly stated or not, is true and ought to have been said in this way, and anyone speaking otherwise deserves criticism. For he says that in the case of universal contradictions, it is necessary that one part of the contradiction be true and the other false—here using "contradiction" to mean "opposition." If he does not express it this way in his wording, it is not only for the sake of praised obscurity but also for the sake of truth. For he wishes to distinguish apparent oppositions from true ones, since some seem to exist when they do not. He assigns the common name "opposition" to them before they are distinguished, especially the highest kind, which is analogous both to the opposition in the statement (which might reasonably be called a "contradiction," as it exists in the statement, as the name itself indicates) and to the opposition in reality, including contraries, privatives, and

relational opposites. But the opposition in the statement, which might reasonably be called a "contradiction," since it exists in the statement, includes both proper contradictions, which never coincide, and those that coincide in some way. The former are specific contradictions and are properly called such, while the latter have the name "contradiction" as they are oppositions in the statement and, so to speak, in their material aspect, but they lack the specific notion of contradiction, which is the complete mutual exclusion and absolute opposition of their parts. That these seem to be contradictions is clear from Aristotle's own words, for he adds: "It might seem absurd at first glance because 'a man is not white' appears to signify the same as 'no man is white.'" For those who examine such matters without scrutiny and carelessly make assertions about them, he says, claim that the oppositions of indefinite propositions are contradictions. For they say that "no man is white" is opposed contradictorily to "some man is white," and "a man is not white" is equivalent to "no man is white" and is contradictorily opposed to "some man is white," and these can never be simultaneously true. But even if it seems that these are the same and coexist, they neither signify the same thing nor necessarily coexist. It is clear, then, that the argument Plethon presents is the very one by which he says some are deceived, including Aristotle, and for this reason they think that indefinite contradictions can be true. For they think that "a man is not white" is the same as "no man is white," seizing on the customary use of language for their argument. But these are not the same. For how could they signify the same thing when they neither convert in predication, nor follow one another, nor belong to the same genus, nor are necessarily true at the same time, except in the case of impossible matter? And how could one affirmation be opposed to two contradictions, which would necessarily happen if these were the same? Then, who does not know that "no man is white" is opposed to "some man is white" as true to false, while "a man is not white" can be true simultaneously with "some man is white"? For it is true to say that some man is white, and also that wood or anything else is not a white man, whether it is white or not. But Plethon, it seems, by dividing and extending the meaning of "is not," understands "a man is not white" as equivalent to "no man is white," just as "these things are not" and "one who does good does not exist up to a certain point." Thus, he relies on the sound of the words and their verbal quality to recognize propositions that are simultaneously true or contradictory, rather than on their truth and logical consistency, or the opposite, when they correspond to reality. This is something many before him, lacking Aristotle's precision, have misunderstood. It is difficult to force the rules of art onto the use of language when it does not fit, or to make the use of language stronger than what follows from it in such cases. For where does the use of language recognize the difference between the definite and indefinite, the transformations of negation, and the like? But there are cases where it agrees with the rules of art, and others where it does not, and the lesser part is set aside and ignored by those who have sense. Thus, Aristotle is unjustly accused by Plethon in this matter. For Aristotle does not say that some specific contradictions are simultaneously true, but rather that some oppositions in the statement, which might reasonably be called universal contradictions as they are opposed in the statement, are contradictions in the proper sense, having the specific character of contradiction, which is their reference to the same subject and is the cause of their ultimate incompatibility, as in the case of universal and particular propositions. Others, which are not contradictions but seem to be, have the material aspect of contradictions—the identity of subject and predicate in the statement—but lack their specific character, the reference to the same subject and reality. Such are the particular propositions and the universal propositions not called universal, which have the same force as the former.

8. Having thus appropriately clarified the matter of contradiction in his discussions on propositions and handed down to us the true contradiction, which cannot coexist, as the first and greatest of the interconnected principles, Aristotle everywhere uses this principle. In the Metaphysics, he demonstrates it with the strongest arguments and refutes those who oppose it. But Plethon, being entirely devoid of logical method—for it is clear that he has not penetrated the depth of Aristotle's arguments, nor indeed of any argument, but only sees the surface—brings forward those rotten arguments long since refuted by Aristotle and accuses the Philosopher of them again. In addition, he criticizes what Aristotle legislates about the mixture of necessity and existence, claiming that these are badly defined. For it seems he is eager to let fly the arrows of his ignorance against every Aristotelian work. But the matter of the conclusion of such a mixture can be defended by those who have only just tasted logical methods against Plethon. For my part, I think it is time to move on to what follows, as I cannot endure the blasphemies against Aristotle any longer, and I am already weary of opposing them and eager to be rid of both as quickly as possible.

9. Plethon further claims that Aristotle did not speak well about the soul. For instance, he says that Aristotle errs by asserting that every intellect is identical in substance to its activity. Since Aristotle does not distinguish and says this applies to every intellect, it is clear that he considers the human intellect to be of this kind as well. Consequently, when the intellect ceases to act (for it does not always think), it would lose its substance along with its activity and perish, and then, when it thinks again, it would come back to life. I suppose Plethon is alluding here to what Aristotle philosophized in the thirtieth book of the Metaphysics. But it is clear that Aristotle does not believe the human intellect to be such that its activity and substance are the same, as he explains in the third book of On the Soul, where he says that the intellect in potentiality and the intellect in actuality are the same in subject, though they differ in time, in completeness and incompleteness, and in that the one is impassive while the other is passive, though not in the same way as sensation, but in its potentiality toward intelligible objects. Aristotle also says many other things there, from which it is clear to those who listen without distortion that he does not consider the human intellect to be something absolutely simple, like the intellect of God, but rather that the nature of the intellect is a certain power of the rational human soul, which exists first in potentiality and is later brought into actuality, and that its being in actuality is then inseparable and permanent, being one with its subject and distinguished only in this way, and distinguished in actuality, as this difference is defined by time and is real, not conceptual. In the Metaphysics, Aristotle says that every intellect is identical in substance to its activity, but he is speaking of every divine intellect, since he posits many eternal and intellectual substances after the first. How they are ordered is not our concern here. But as has been said before, both Plato and Aristotle talk nonsense when they say there are many gods, however they may be ordered under the first God by each of them. Therefore, neither should Aristotle be disparaged more than Plato, nor should Plato be praised, but both should be considered as speaking nonsense and committing impiety against the divine nature in all they have fantastically said about the multitude and order of these gods.

10. But now Aristotle must justly be accused of not declaring that every intellect, but only the divine intellect, is identical in substance to its activity. As for the human intellect, he is so far from thinking such a thing that he even concludes the superiority of the divine intellect from its difference from our own. For having previously determined about the blessed and immovable substance, as much as pertains to its perfection, unity, and multiplicity, he thought it necessary to consider what pertains to its activity. And having

demonstrated that the first immaterial substance moves as the intelligible, the good, and the desirable, he then inquires about each of these, determining what belongs to it as intellect and intelligible, as good, and as desirable. Since the intellect can be compared to its act of thinking in three ways—first, if it thinks in potentiality or by habit, as in the case of one who is asleep; second, as in the case of one who is awake, if it thinks in actuality but is not itself its act of thinking (both of which apply to humans); and third, if the intellect is itself its act of thinking—Aristotle declares that the divine intellect does not think in the first or second way. For if it thought only in potentiality, or if it thought in actuality but was not itself its act of thinking, it would not be the best or most perfect substance, nor would it think continuously or from itself, but would acquire its thinking from outside and with effort, and would lose its being as the most divine and honorable intellect. Therefore, if he did not think these things applied to the human intellect, and there is no intellect besides the divine and the human, he would in vain have demonstrated that the divine intellect is the most divine and honorable by showing that neither the things said nor their opposites apply to it. For he did not posit certain forms as secondary intellects of a lower nature to which either both or one of these things would apply, but he placed the divine nature above our intellect, as he himself babbled, divided. Here I must also criticize the Philosopher: he speaks well in saying that there are no forms outside of God, which are worse than Him and in some way causes of things here, but he speaks poorly in not thinking that there are certain separate substances and wholly other beings in God's creations, but only the human intellect.

11. Aristotle discusses the divine intellect in the thirtieth book of the Metaphysics, not simply about intellect in general, but insofar as he rightly demonstrates the superiority of the divine intellect over the human intellect from the characteristics unique to it. From this, it is clear that he declares the substance of the first principle—immovable, eternal, and which he posits as intellect, intelligible, ultimate good, and desirable—to be identical with its activity. For he considers this alone to be pure activity, having no admixture of potentiality, and as a subsistent and simple activity, and therefore as substance. These matters are treated in the thirtieth book of the Metaphysics. In the third book of On the Soul (for it is not wrong to revisit the same points for a clearer manifestation of the truth), there he discusses the human intellect, saying that the substance of the rational soul is intellect in potentiality toward all things, affected by all things, becoming all things, and again making all things intellect. He places this difference in the substance of the soul. Plato did not need this distinction because he did not posit intelligible things as existing in potentiality, but rather all intelligible things exist as such in themselves, while our intellect only attains them in potentiality. But the Philosopher (Aristotle) distinguishes in this way and says that each intellect is separable, unmixed, and impassive, though these attributes apply most properly to the intellect in actuality. The intellect in actuality is specifically identical in substance to its activity, and it is separable as it has no bodily organ, impassive as it is not perfected by another but perfects itself in actuality or is already perfect, and unmixed as it is not entangled with material things in any way, nor is it naturally inclined or striving toward them, but as substance it is activity, turning indivisibly toward itself and thinking itself as substance. Or it remains inseparably and unwaveringly attached to itself and the higher intelligibles in its contemplation of them. All these attributes belong primarily and properly to the divine intellect, while they belong to the human soul in a less perfect likeness and in accordance with its substantial and perfect nature. For what the divine intellect possesses always and simply by its substance, the human intellect possesses in a derivative way, at times and in potentiality, as it ascends from a lower and inferior state to a better and higher one, progressing until it attains

the perfection of its own substance, which is a likeness by descent of the highest, divine, and first productive intellect.

12. These are the views Aristotle holds about the human intellect, as is evident to those who justly and wisely examine his words and intent. We leave aside Alexander, Plotinus, and Marinus, who somehow misunderstood Aristotle's teachings, not interpreting them in accordance with Aristotle, and Alexander even more so than the others, to the point that he attributes both potentiality and activity to the rational soul in its act of thinking, distinguishes them in time, and says that the soul sometimes thinks and sometimes does not, and when it is not thinking, it has the potentiality to think, and when it has thought, it has already thought in actuality, and it is intellect in actuality, and the potentiality for thinking something else is never absent from it, even if it thinks many things in actuality, as long as it is joined to the body. If what troubles Plethon and makes him suspect these things is that Aristotle said the intellect in actuality is identical in substance to its activity in actuality (for such a reading is found), then Plethon ought to understand that this predication is not according to substance but because activity follows upon its substance. For when its substance becomes actual, immediately what belongs to it, namely its activity, follows, which is not the case as long as the intellect is in potentiality. For the intellect in potentiality does not have activity unless it has become actual. That the Philosopher does not mean the activity of the human intellect to be identical with its substance, as in the case of the divine intellect, is clear when we compare what is said in the Metaphysics with what is said in On the Soul. There he says, "There must, therefore, be a principle of such a kind that its substance is activity," while here he says that the intellect in actuality is identical in substance to its activity. These are very different: for the divine intellect, he says that its substance is itself activity, while for the human intellect, he says that it is identical in substance to its activity when it becomes intellect in actuality, that is, it has being in actuality and acting as following upon its substance, not as in the case of the intellect in potentiality, where being in actuality and acting do not follow upon its being such, even though it is in the substance of the soul, as is the intellect in actuality. But that this too is like Plethon's other slanders or misunderstandings of Aristotle has become sufficiently clear from these points; for a little suffices for the wise.

13. Since Plethon also tries to show that Aristotle is inconsistent with himself in this matter, because in On the Generation of Animals he allows that the human intellect is older in time than this body, and then criticizes those who say that learning is recollection, we must here too reach the demonstration of the truth.

14. Regarding the claim that the human intellect enters from outside because it is impossible for this intellectual principle to arise from the power in the seed, if it is to be eternal and indestructible, which he clearly asserts for the human intellect, it is evident from what he discusses in the De Anima and the Generation of Animals. Whether it existed independently beforehand and later enters the human body according to Plato's view, or is created and inserted simultaneously, as the teachers of sacred truth suggest, it is not clear from his words; hence, some say one thing, others say he accepted the latter. It remains now to consider whether the essential intellect of the soul alone or the whole nature of the human soul enters from outside and is eternal and indestructible, where Aristotle seems to deviate from sacred truth. It seems to me that Aristotle did not think the intellect existed somewhere else independently and then united with this body, since he posits the rational soul as the entelechy of the human body and clearly states that the intellect arises from this essence; and he everywhere defines entelechy as being temporally posterior to potentiality, neither being created by God for each individual intellect and inserted into the body before existing either outside the

body or in the body itself. This is Aristotle's view, though he would have desired to hold such a view; but the first generative principle inherent in the seed, being a vegetative soul, later becomes sensitive, the power in the seed being sufficient to advance this principle to a more perfect form; then the sensitive soul similarly becomes intellectual, not by the creative power of the seed reaching this, which could never extend to something surpassing its material nature, but by some higher creative power, which is God, under whom the nature of the sensitive soul being illuminated is transformed into a more perfect form; and this is what the Philosopher means by saying the intellect enters from outside. He does not mean the very nature of the human soul enters from outside, or that the sensitive soul perishes, or that it remains sharing the governance of the body under different parts, so that man is formed and moved by multiple souls; but the perfection of the human soul, which is its rational and intellectual power, at the culmination of human generation, which nature has set as its end, occurs through some illumination from outside, illuminating the essence of the soul and disposing it for communion with eternity and divinity. Many other pieces of evidence could support this view of Aristotle, including what is said in the Metaphysics; there, comparing the intellectual soul to the forms in Plato, he states that this form remains after the body, without saying it was before matter or the body, as Plato said about the forms, although if he thought the intellectual soul existed before the body, he would have mentioned it there, where he likened it to those forms; but he stated its similarity only in remaining after the body. Some have inferred that Aristotle conceded to Plato that the human intellect existed before the body from what he said in the Generation of Animals: "It is evident from such considerations that all souls do not preexist as older than the body, except the intellect alone which enters from outside and is divine only." They are mistaken; there, he does not inquire whether all souls preexist as absolutely older than the body, but whether they exist from the beginning in the seed derived from the actually living and generating human, or some do so and others enter later. Inquiring thus, he concludes that the intellect does not preexist in this way, that is, it does not exist from the beginning in the body, but the vegetative and sensitive souls preexist thus, both being dependent on the power of the seed, only the intellect enters from outside, though if he said the intellect existed before the body simply, he would not necessarily imply it was older in time; for as he says in the Generation of Animals, "The prior can mean both that for the sake of which and that because of which; one is prior in generation, the other in essence." Thus, the intellect could be said to be prior to the body or the other souls in it not by generation but by essence, just as the final essential form is temporally and generatively last but first in essence. Defining the soul as the entelechy of an organic body, he posits the intellect as an essential part of the soul, the best and only indestructible part, saying it has no organ; questioning how the intellect could be an entelechy and how the discourse on the soul could apply to it universally is a matter of great inquiry and beyond the present need, as is the assertion of the intellect alone being indestructible. Though seeming to touch reasonable grounds, it appears to differ somehow from sacred truth, which attributes the assumption of bodies to souls for their perfection once, not many times moving from one body to another as Plato fabricated, applying it for justice and purification. Neither reincarnations of the soul nor the assumption of this body once were considered by Aristotle, rightly rejecting both, deeming it unnecessary for the intellectual power of the soul, leaving the body to draw anything from the other powers, which are only for the association with the body and would be in vain without it.

BOOK TWO AGAINST PLETHON

15. Let these matters rest for now. We must return to Plethon's attack on Aristotle. Aristotle does not posit the intellect as older, existing independently before entering the body, nor does he risk inconsistency in positing this while rejecting Plato's recollections. This is further evidence that the human intellect did not seem older to him, nor entirely uncreated and without cause, contrary to Plethon's slander. If the soul did not exist before uniting with the body, there would be no need for remembrance, nor would it recall anything forgotten. For what would be the cause from God for souls initially existing without bodies to later unite with them? If they suffered this by force, then the composite of soul and body would be against nature since all force is against nature. How could anything violent happen to the intellectual essence, which is not to be conceded even to the heavenly bodies, inferior in their kind? If the desire for union with bodies was inherent, they would immediately unite with bodies upon being created, so their desire would not be in vain for long. They would not be hindered from this desire by anything, as it is reasonable to exclude force. If they desired to unite with bodies, being able to remain separate, it is incredible; no one willingly desires the worse, unless deceived. One must suppose those souls incapable of being deceived, since, being without bodies, they would know everything, and it would be impossible for them to be deceived by the desire for the partial good without bodily change, from which such passions evidently arise in the incontinent.

16. Furthermore, if God ordained souls to unite with bodies, without any prior wickedness in the souls, it is difficult to consider God either ignorant of the worse condition He gave them, thinking He gave the better and being deceived, or doing this willingly and knowingly, if He did not make them better over time, keeping them in the former condition. If they had to undergo punishment, the union with the body would not be a fitting punishment for the soul's fault; punishment, being contrary to the sufferer's good, must be an evil to the sufferer. The union of the soul with the body is a good by nature, and this is the natural end of generation. It would follow that man came into being incidentally and by chance, which Plato claims is the end of animals; all these are manifestly false and sources of many absurdities. How could the soul remember using the body, which caused its forgetfulness? If, before uniting with the body, it had forgotten due to suffering, it would have a hard time recovering this knowledge amid the confusion of the body; if it happened upon entering the body, it must always forget as long as it is in it, not helped by time, which would rather expel its memory, always presenting the same obstacles to knowing. How could it be led to remembrance by the senses, by which it suffered forgetfulness? If these and their images are sufficient to restore lost knowledge in the soul, why would they not guide it from the beginning to the knowledge of principles, for which it is naturally capable? Knowing these, it would necessarily know the derivatives. Where would it have come by the knowledge of all principles and conclusions before being and existing in the body, since it would not have acquired it from there, and a certain power of knowing universals created in the body, which, like fire, kindling in the images of all things, understands all that can be understood through those principles? How would it enter the body to forget? Thus, according to Plato, it must suffer punishment, yet nothing worse befalling it than such ignorance; or primarily using the body to achieve knowledge, as soon as it could choose and act, it would strive for the vision of truth through all correct actions and practical ones. It is clear that through all proper activities, man hastens to the vision of truth, as if coming to this life to attain knowledge.

17. There is no necessity for the human soul to seek only what it has lost but to acquire the better immediately upon its creation if it can act according to its innate desire for truth and its natural preparation

for it, using the same aids, time, and images, and appropriate diligence, and also requiring these aids if acquiring what it did not previously have. For it is impossible to gain everything at once; one must know the universals to know other things certainly through them, and these must be gathered from the particulars; this knowledge requires frequent sensory activity and a long time to accomplish. Recalling everything at once would be possible only for one who had previously known everything simultaneously and had forgotten everything, being capable of remembering all at once when it first began to remember, and this not after a long time of forgetfulness but knowing everything before uniting with the body and dimmed by its influence. We do not replace one sense with another for the distinct apprehension of each thing, but the same senses serve all our knowledge; hence, when they first begin not to obstruct the soul's clairvoyance, it is likely to immediately shine forth with the acquired habits and remember everything at once, like the entire atmosphere above us is illuminated as soon as the overhanging cloud disperses in the sun's rays. However, it is not my aim now to refute the recollections, reincarnations, and preexistence of souls, in which Plato's followers take delight, nor to refute the arguments by which they were led to posit these; for these points have been mentioned incidentally, like in an excursion, but only to defend Aristotle against Plethon's accusations.

18. It has been shown that Plethon's accusations are faulty and self-contradictory, and he says nothing blameless. He criticizes Aristotle for positing the human intellect as imperishable and eternal, yet never using this argument in his ethical treatises, although it would greatly contribute to discussions of morals. Plethon's error is worse, as he denies any good for man after the end of this life, when it is most fitting to act well and be much happier than living in this life.

19. These are added by Plethon to Aristotle's incorrect statements about the soul, though not everything said, but also what was left unsaid should be added. I say that for the former, the Philosopher knew not to mix everything, as Plato did not distinguish natural, mathematical, and theological sciences but made everything a matter of enthusiasm. However, Aristotle intended to assign the proper arguments to each genre, and when he sensed them inclined to another science, which can often occur, he immediately avoided it, lest he be unwittingly drawn to another theory and miss his aim, which he very wisely set for himself. He maintains this principle even in his ethical writings, as is evident from many other points and from what he says in the twentieth book. After stating, "The virtues of the compound are human, and the life according to them and happiness, but that of the intellect is separate," he adds, "for so much has been said about it; to examine further exceeds the scope of the present inquiry," meaning it pertains to another greater and higher science, the first philosophy, or if one wishes, the study of the soul, also greater than the present subject. Thus, he does not explicitly say the human intellect is imperishable and eternal in the natural works for the reason he mentions, intending to discuss it in the appropriate contexts with demonstration, but he does say it is separate, divine, the most divine and best part of us, which implies its eternality and imperishability, and such things necessitate distinguishing human activities. Plethon, boasting that Aristotle overlooked this, says it would be the most significant and proper human characteristic, meaning the intellect, but Aristotle said this before him in the Ethics, stating directly, "For the thing proper to each nature is the best and most pleasant for each; and for man, the life according to the intellect, for this is most truly man, that is, the intellect." Thus, this is also the happiest. Plethon deliberately omitted this part as it least suited Plato. So, Aristotle speaks consistently with himself and all wise men, and with Plato when necessary, and thus his words defeat the slanderers.

BOOK TWO AGAINST PLETHON

20. That Aristotle denies any good for man after the end of this life is evidently Plethon's slander. Where does Aristotle say this? Plethon could not show any such place unless referring to the doubts at the end of the first book of Ethics. There, Aristotle states quite the opposite. First, establishing the doubt, he says, "It seems that there is something good and bad for the dead, as there is for the living, even if they do not perceive it, like honors and dishonors and the successes and failures of children and descendants." And again, "It would be strange if the dead were affected and became sometimes happy, sometimes wretched. It is also strange that nothing at all would reach them of their descendants' circumstances." Here, no one could accuse Aristotle of attributing inaction or nonexistence to the deceased. He does not doubt whether there is any good for man after life's end, but whether any of the human goods or evils affecting the living apply in some way to the deceased after life's end. Far from declaring no deceased person blessed, in resolving the previous question of whether the living should be called blessed, he says, "We will not call those among the living blessed who have and will have the mentioned things, that is, activities according to virtue that are perfect and unimpeded in a complete life." Then he adds, "Blessed are humans, that is, according to the life fitting human nature," whether with the compounded blessedness or as the intellectual and divine nature requires another more stable and unchanging blessedness. Then, resolving the question at hand, he says, "We must consider this difference and more likely inquire about the dead if they share in any good or evil; for it seems that from these, whether something reaches them, either good or contrary, trivial or great, or not at all, it is such that it does not make those who are not blessed, blessed, nor does it take away blessedness from those who are." Thus, successes of friends seem to contribute something to the deceased, such things and so much that they neither make the blessed not blessed.

21. So, he posits that some of the deceased are blessed, and their blessedness is not disturbed by the misfortunes of their relatives here, nor do the unfortunate among the deceased become blessed by the prosperity of their relatives here. If something from here affects them, whether good or bad, and if they share in any good or bad with their relatives here enduring either, it is something trivial and small. Where does he say there is no good at all for the deceased there, from which Alexander was led to the nonsense about the soul? If the Philosopher's question about goods here was not clear, whether they reach or concern them, nor stating anywhere that the deceased have any significant inclination affected by the relatives' good or bad here, not making them blessed or wretched, but perhaps a slight change in their state, Alexander could have attributed the cause of error to Aristotle, as does Plethon. But now, these being so and the Philosopher's intention far from this, who will not laugh at both, especially the slanderer?

22. If Plethon's reasoning was influenced by what is said about courage in the third book of Ethics, Aristotle there says, "Death is the most fearful thing, for it is the end, and nothing appears any more to the dead, neither good nor evil." But Plethon should have known that Aristotle, considering courage to be especially concerned with the dangers and fears of death, explains this with reason; he states that the brave are the most enduring of all, and this is an exceptional quality of their disposition, recognized through enduring the greatest dangers, few as they are, and that death is the greatest and most fearful of all physical evils. Therefore, courage is particularly related to the dangers of death, and death is most fearful because it is the end of life here and nothing more appears to the dead, neither good nor evil; all bodily goods are immediately destroyed upon departure, for which people generally strive to live; likewise, all bodily evils. Nothing is truer than this.

23. Therefore, Aristotle speaks of death as the destroyer of bodily goods and evils, and as the most fearful to all, not as if there were no good or evil for man after this life, nor that man does not exist at all, as his intention and words clearly testify. If he considered death the most fearful of all temporary evils or believed it the most fearful to most people, or thought it better concerning temporary goods and evils, or it just happened to be Plato's opinion, let this pass for now. To me, it seems ridiculous for anyone to believe Plato's followers, who regard the goods of this life not as human goods, nor the evils as evils, and consequently, neither as fearful; but wise and rational people would agree with the Peripatetics that temporary goods are the least of goods and their opposites fearful but not to the extent of abandoning noble deeds because of them, recognizing that there are many degrees of fears and goods. If Plato's followers held this view, no one among humans would be noble, nor anyone to be praised, nor rewarded in states, and the brave would be rare indeed, avoiding all temporary goods as not their own and enduring all hardships easily as not their own, or the truly immortal man, the active intellect, would be falsely accused by them against Aristotle, as nothing adding to those who think the better, and starting from the basest principle of absurdities about the human soul, as we have already refuted, there is no need to examine this now.

24. Aristotle is also accused of inadequacy in his discourse on virtues, saying virtues are means and vices are extremes, not specifying clearly whether this mean is determined by quality or quantity, but seeming to define it by quantity, from which he says it is a vice not to fear thunderbolts. This, he says, is neither true nor does it seem so to Plato and the better thinkers, but they define bravery and fear by quality, similarly the other virtues, by the shameful and not shameful, the beautiful and not beautiful; it is foolish, he says, to fear thunderbolts and earthquakes, for it is not shameful to die from these, and such things rarely happen, and besides, one could not guard against them even if afraid. Then he concedes that the noble and good are in the mean but as using opposite passions; defining these by the shameful and not shameful, not as perhaps avoiding the extremes of more and less, and says Aristotle places vice only in the extremes and virtue in the mean, but rather one can see the worst person in some mean; for one who desires what should be neglected and neglects what should be desired is utterly wicked, yet in a mean of two equally bad things, this one desiring what is necessary and unnecessary, and the other neglecting everything alike.

25. Plethon, influenced by such things, says Aristotle fell short of the necessary, suffering the same as before, and recklessly casting accusations against Aristotle, earning a reputation of ignorance and slander.

26. However, it is obviously false that Aristotle places vice only in extremes; he neither says that every virtue is a mean nor that every vice is an extreme, but for those in which virtue is a mean, he places vice as extremes. Not every action or passion admits a mean; for instance, envy, adultery, and such are considered bad in themselves, not in their excesses or deficiencies, but because they are always wrong when done; so far from placing all vice in extremes. Plethon, alleging Aristotle places vice only in extremes, tries to show a vice that is a mean, which is absurd. While it is true that one who neglects all good things and desires all shameful things is utterly wicked, if it is even possible for anyone to be entirely such, and therefore extremely bad, having heightened vice, erring in every choice and avoidance; how could such a one be in the mean? If he says those desiring everything and neglecting everything, what should and should not be desired, are the half-wicked, and the mean is that person, it is impossible for anyone to be like this, nor would the extremely wicked be the mean, even if such existed; how could anyone at the same time desire what is to be desired and not, like being temperate and intemperate, acting justly and unjustly, knowing and not knowing? No more

than one can say someone desires to be hot and cold simultaneously. However, it is possible for the same person to desire everything right and wrong, or most things, at different times, easily turning human preference to opposites; similarly, one neglecting all right things today may neglect all wrong things tomorrow. There must be people like Plethon's half-wicked, showing both kinds of dispositions and recognized and named from it if there is to be anyone between these extremes.

27. Since these are impossible, one neglecting all right things and desiring all right things would be the best; the other neglecting all wrong things and desiring all wrong things, the worst, and each would be an extreme; the mean would most likely be someone desiring what should be desired and not desired, and neglecting what should and should not be neglected, like most people, those extremes being rare, if not impossible. However, this person is not the mean except in the whole, and therefore not the best; the mean of moral actions and passions is to be defined by reason, not in the whole. It would be astonishing if there were someone neglecting all good and bad things and desiring nothing or desiring everything and neglecting nothing; for human life is governed by choice, avoidance, desire, and temper. If in desiring what should not be desired, one neglects all that should be desired, and in desiring what should be desired, neglects all that should not be desired, it would be the same to say someone desires both what should be desired and not, and neglects both, even if not everyone shows the same desire and neglect for the same things, but where one desires, another neglects, equally for good and bad things. If these are the same, the utterly wicked would not be a mean between two. Let Plethon's absurdities be left aside.

28. Since Plethon believes virtue is a mean, involving the good and noble in opposite passions like courage and fear, desire and indifference, and defining each by the beautiful and the unbeautiful, why does he find Aristotle worse saying the same? Aristotle does not place virtue as a mean between the extremes of vices, nor by some mixture of opposites like gray among colors. But because human choice often varies about the same passions and actions, sometimes adhering to the good and noble, or deviating from it, this happening in two ways, either desiring or avoiding more than necessary and beyond right reason, that is, exceeding, or falling short in that passion or action, hence the dispositions related to these are said to have deficiencies or excesses in the use and disposition of passions and actions, while those limited to the good and blameless are means between those excesses and deficiencies, being extremes in the best and noble sense, means in essence and reason; the definition of virtue is taken according to right reason. This is not taken by the proportion of the matter in the passions, but relative to the virtuous person; for virtue is of a human being, whose best is not what is simply best; it cannot be defined among humans and their passions, but what right reason defines in them, as such, acting or suffering in this or that way. This is the mean in moral virtue, some proportion in a passion or action of right reason to the person, where the passion and the virtue in it exist.

29. Since whatever accords with right reason is virtue, and what accords with right reason is not simple but diverse for us, virtue, being extreme in the best and noble sense, is a mean according to reason. For if every passion and action of ours is to be good and done well, these must be defined differently for us, appropriate to the differences of persons and other circumstances as reason dictates, this the Philosopher best demonstrates in the Ethics. Just as Plethon defines virtue by the noble and not noble, and the shameful and not shameful, so Aristotle and much better by the when, for what reason, towards whom, for what reason, and how, says virtue is defined; this is the mean and best; and considering the virtues themselves simply, they are defined by the noble and decent, and nothing is a mean in them; but defined differently

relative to us, they have the concept of the mean, not that virtue has some mean, but that virtue itself is the mean, defined by quantity, being in quality. For the subject of moral virtue is the soul of a man, particularly the virtuous, in its entirety, its passions and actions, the form being some equality and proportion in the relation to the possessor, according to the other circumstances; its nature and genus is quality.

30. The Philosopher places virtue itself in quality, not quantity, as shown by many indications; first, he says it is not the mean of the matter, but is taken relative to the quality of the person, when it neither exceeds the proportion of that person nor is deficient, whether the action or the passion, so virtue is some equality of passion in its proportion to the possessor, and so it is not quantity but quality. Further, he defines virtue by the noble and the fitting everywhere, applying it to time, cause, and other circumstances very well; "how, to whom, on what occasion, and for how long, it is not easy to define generally," he says, "but this must be considered in each case; but generally it is true that when, for what reason, towards whom, for what reason, and how is a mean in all passions and actions and best." Far from defining moral virtue strictly by quantity, he encompasses all good and orders it, placing virtue in quality. "For good," he says in the first book of the Ethics, "is said in the 'what,' as God and intellect, in the 'quality' as virtues, and in the 'quantity' as the moderate." If there is no mean in moral virtues in the matter, but only in reason, and some means exist in quantity, it is clear that they belong to quantity in reason; nothing prevents virtue itself in quality from being assigned somewhat to quantity, as a mean for us, and not by the magnitude or smallness of the fearful does Aristotle define courage, if he does not give virtue simply by excess and defect, but rather by equality. He says the brave endure because it is noble, or not shameful not to, whatever the fearful things, greater or lesser, speaking the same as Plato's followers, if virtue is especially shown in enduring the difficult nobly, one enduring greater fears is braver, not by the form of virtue but by the soul's impulse excelling; the brave must endure as right reason dictates and for the noble's sake; this is the end of virtue, and so all moral virtue is defined.

31. Plethon believed that Aristotle, dividing the fearful into great and small and placing the virtue concerning them in the small and great concerning the fearful, thought this false and inconsistent. Aristotle, in neither exceeding nor falling short in facing such things with courage or fear, but doing so as one should and for the right reasons, defines the virtue concerning the brave and fearful, so that one can face the greatest fears unshaken with virtue and rightly be disturbed by the smallest and not display courage. He also speaks of some fears beyond human, not as more deserving of fear, but as instilling fear in all humans, in which courage is least shown; one should not face these without fear, even the brave, as they are of a superior order and allow no avoidance, neither earning praise if one does not fear them nor shame if one does, for there is nothing shameful in enduring such fear of necessity. These follow Aristotle's words, and if all human fears, the greatest being the dangers of death, should be endured by humans for the sake of the noble, greater and lesser alike, Aristotle says this before Plethon, and he should not be reproached for it, nor criticized for the fears beyond human, if he says such fears neither add vice nor virtue but rather insensibility or lack of feeling to those who do not fear.

32. Plethon says it is foolish not to fear thunderbolts; I agree it is foolish not to fear such things, not following Aristotle's words here, as rational people endure even these for the sake of the noble. Concerning human fears, he thinks it foolish to despise them without any expected praise or gain. For example, why should one scorn the danger of waves without gain, fame, or virtue, sailing merely to safely pass through the

sea? Similarly, for thunderbolts, earthquakes, and chasms, with great likelihood, it is very foolish to be fearless unless one is to endure for some virtue. Hence, many have left earthquake-prone or lightning-struck regions, choosing safer places, and some places have always remained uninhabited due to such continuous suffering. Since it is otherwise impossible to guard against these while present, they secured themselves by fleeing those places; even where such things happen rarely, one should not scorn them, for it is very foolish to suffer from them, neglecting the rare occurrence while being able to guard against them. I know many who have been crushed in their homes during an earthquake or struck by falling rocks who would not have been harmed if they had not neglected the danger. They could not prevent the earthquake but could have been in a safer place while it occurred. If there is nowhere entirely safe from these, it does not mean one should be fearless, but rather these things are more necessarily feared if they cannot be avoided; hence, everyone fears such things as superior to human capacity. Apart from all this, fear arises from love; we fear most what we love most and what can harm them, so we must fear thunderbolts, earthquakes, and such things, even if they come from a divine source and cannot be guarded against, as they oppose our life, which we love most. Thus, we should regard them as we could guard against them if possible; when not, at least pray to avoid such things and anything else hostile to our life; but endure whatever God ordains. Fools, through weakness of reason and ignorance, do not fear such things, says Aristotle, either thinking they will never happen, cannot harm if they do, are weak, or that our life is not worth loving, or that there is no good for us in this life except to escape it. That thinking all this is very foolish is evident. Let the choice of those philosophizing according to Christ be now honored with silence; or if anyone before the times of true teaching could somehow hate this life for virtue's sake, God allowing this for a testimony of truth, even among the erring, this disposition comes from a divine portion, setting a certain rule for divine laws. The Philosopher speaks of human virtue and political happiness, and we follow his intention in this.

33. Therefore, to fear the things that destroy our life, for the sake of ourselves and for the common good, if it is accompanied by virtue, is the attribute of people who possess reason. However, this does not mean that one should endure something disgraceful because of such fear; rather, these things should be feared as long as we are not endangered by their dread and become base. Additionally, enduring these things for the sake of virtue, as reason dictates, is praised by all people and by Aristotle himself as true courage. Indeed, even if there is some protection for those who desire these things, one should submit to them for the sake of not being disgraceful or for the sake of the good. Otherwise, living underground like someone struck and idle and negligent of all virtue due to the fear of superhuman occurrences, neither Aristotle nor any other person would consider it worthy. Therefore, it does not seem proper to consider them so; rather, those things possessing fear, which can destroy our life, are divided. He says that not fearing them at all is unreasonable and results from the weakness of reason, as in human life; things beyond this, being more divine and coming to the minds of very few, should not be considered. Being so struck by these things that one tolerates something disgraceful or neglects necessary duties out of fear is wickedness, just as the opposite is considered virtue. These things would not seem burdensome to anyone who is just. But Plethon, hearing Aristotle wickedly, thought that he provided some pretext for his wickedness even here.

34. Enough of these things, then. Since Plethon says that Aristotle's philosophizing about the ultimate end is blameworthy, he is thus very clearly either acting wickedly, playing, or being ignorant of the most obvious things, and altogether unworthy of the opinion held by many about him. What then would he not

have suffered if Aristotle's books were either corrupted or not very well understood, while they are preserved and filled with much clarity, such that he dared to be so bold?

35. There are, generally, two opinions about the human end, the more reasonable ones: some declare that pleasure is the good for humans, and others that the good is nobility. Those around Eudoxus are in the first group; those around Plato are in the second group, for Plato is the leader of the latter, who seem to speak more reasonably than the former. Aristotle, having placed the discussions about pleasure at the end of the Ethics, before touching on the discussions about the end, refutes the opinion of Eudoxus, although he previously agreed with it dialectically in many respects. He says that pleasure is not the ultimate end, for many reasons, and for this reason too: the ultimate end must be good and chosen for its own sake. Pleasure, however, is not always good and chosen, but it is the pleasure that follows the best actions, having goodness and desirability from elsewhere. Therefore, it could not be the ultimate end in itself. Thus, he says that the human good is not pleasure itself; it necessarily shares in the ultimate end, proceeding from obtaining it, since some pleasure follows every end and good, present through sensation, through memory when it has ceased, and through hope when it is about to happen. Therefore, he says that every activity is completed by pleasure, as pleasure follows every activity, but not as if each activity aims at some end related to pleasure. After dismissing the discussions about pleasure, which was thought to be the human good, not being such at all, and wanting to discuss the true end, he does not entirely exclude the nobility of character, as he did with pleasure, but if no other end prevails for humans, this would be the nobility of character. For, he says, the life according to reason is proper for humans, if indeed this is primarily what man is. This life is therefore the happiest; secondarily, the life according to the other virtues.

36. Since the most appropriate and ultimate end of man is sought, the nobility of character does not seem to be such an end for those who investigate it; for this is considered the end of moral passions and actions, and we do not become most like the divine through moral actions, of which these passions and actions partake the least. He says that we must become blessed by becoming as similar as possible to the gods, and we are not altogether separated from beings devoid of reason, which must not partake in our happiness. Therefore, we must not place our ultimate happiness in moral virtues; rather, he considers the most divine activity within us, which is theoretical and well-suited, to be this human happiness. And this would be the contemplation of the truth. Even if the nobility of character was not considered the end of man, but it was assigned to man and to every being its proper end according to what is good and best, saying that this itself is noble and good, and the good and noble is, he says, intellectual happiness, consisting in the contemplation of the truth. To another, there is another and each has its own natural end. Aristotle also says before Plethon that the good is that in which contemplation and everything else that is good partakes. However, the good itself is not considered the ultimate end of each being; for the good itself is the supreme and common end of all. What kind of end it is, it is not necessary to investigate in the present case; but the good which belongs to us, being proper to each one, is something else, both good and noble. The end is good and noble, but in itself, it is being or life, or movement, or virtue, or contemplation, or something of this sort.

37. All these things have become Aristotle's opinion, as is most clearly shown from his ethical discourses and almost in the same words; he does not say that theoretical pleasure is the human end, except that in contemplating and every activity there is some pleasure which partakes in the end in some way. However, it is not itself the end, and he speaks both most beautifully and most truthfully. Plethon, however, did not dare to

oppose the arguments by which Aristotle separated the good in character from the end, even though he should have defended Plato in this, if anywhere, but he simply says thus: "We say that the good itself is, and the contemplation partaking of it is good, pleasure, and everything else," as if legislating; nor does he clearly define what kind of good the human good is, although there is a great difference between making the good of character the human end or the good simply, and whether it is ours or the idea itself. Therefore, he neither dared to fight against Aristotle's arguments, nor did he consider the arguments about pleasure sufficient to prove that Aristotle was not of Eudoxus's persuasion.

38. But that he said theoretical pleasure is the human good, he slanders; for he slanders if he does not have somewhere to show this saying, so even what he attempts against the theoretical pleasure being the human end, as if Aristotle held this view, is vain and does not apply to Aristotle. Even if Aristotle happened to hold this view, he would never have conquered him with such arguments. For the argument which he thought would show that pleasure is not the human good would rather be an argument for the opposite, if indeed such arguments should be believed in the greatest doctrines. But let us leave these things to those who know to judge; for us, choosing to briefly reveal the truth, we do not think that pleasure is the good, neither simply nor theoretical, nor the moral virtues, but the knowledge of the truth alone, as Aristotle and Truth say, declaring this to be the eternal life for men, "that they may know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent." Thus, it suffices for us, so disposed, to show Plethon as a slanderer, as he attaches a reputation to Aristotle that is least fitting for him. In vain, he also attributed to Aristotle the cause of Epicurus's error; for whether Epicurus thought the psychic pleasure or simply any good to be the good for humans, it is not necessary to examine these things accurately at present; it should rather have been referred to Eudoxus rather than Aristotle, as he says, extolling pleasure, or to Aristotle, clearly stating that contemplation is the human good, neither the good of character nor pleasure, and accusing Eudoxus of magnifying pleasure, while he himself assigns everything proper to humans to pleasure rightly.

39. Since Plethon acknowledges that the heavens are an incorruptible body, he criticizes Aristotle for attributing incorruptibility to the entire nature and calling the heavenly body a fifth element and separate from the others. Plethon himself claims that the heavens are immortal due to the dominance of the soul and sharing the same nature as other things. We will show that our Aristotle is better and more consistent with reason even here. For Aristotle and those around Plato assert that the matter of other bodies is both movable and capable of everything, and can enter into actuality. This is very clear to those who wish to examine it in detail. However, the matter of the heavens is not movable in every way, nor is it capable of everything, but it is movable by rotation and capable of being in a certain place. It is impossible for it to be capable of all forms and to become all things and to enter into actuality of all things. If the form of the heavens is the most perfect, containing all others within itself, then its matter, being in actuality according to its own form, would be capable of all other forms as well. Thus, while being in the form of an incorruptible body, it would still be in potentiality towards the form of a corruptible body. If it ever becomes actual in this, it will be destroyed sometime, or it will again be in potentiality towards its former form and will undergo infinite changes in form. If it never becomes actual in this, this potentiality would be useless, and thus it would not even be matter. Moreover, before receiving that form to which it is in potentiality, it would be deprived of that form, and it would be simultaneously in form and in privation. For the non-existence of the form in the subject that is naturally meant to have it is privation; this is a condition of a corruptible body. Therefore, it is

impossible for the nature of a corruptible and an incorruptible body to be entirely the same, except by analogy, as they share in the principle of potentiality. The matter of the heavens must be potential only to that form which it initially had, by which it is perfectly completed, so that it has no potentiality towards being but only towards place. Moreover, while the other elements exist with opposition, the heavens are free from all opposition, as is evident from their movement. If generation and corruption arise from opposites, how can the matter of the heavenly body, being incorruptible, differ from the corruptible matter of other bodies?

40. Plethon says that fire moves in a circle, but he does not provide a single proof of this. He claims that it is not prevented from moving in a circle. However, if fire were to move in a circle, my dear friend, it would do so when it is in its proper place, and thus it would be of a lower nature than the heavens themselves. For fire also moves in another natural movement, from the center, and is forcibly moved towards the center, and it moves in a circle according to you. The heavens, however, move only in a circle. If the variety and opposition of the movement of fire testify to its change according to nature and its corruption, which I think Plethon would very easily agree to, it follows that the simplicity and incorruptibility of the heavenly body and the immutability of its matter are shown by the unity and uniformity of its movement. Therefore, if fire had, in addition to other movements, the circular movement, it would not be a sign of resemblance to the heavenly body but rather of difference, increasing the causes of its corruptible disposition.

41. Furthermore, it is impossible for fire to move in a circle. For what moves in a circle is indifferent to all places, but for those that move in a straight line, place is defined by the principle of heaviness and lightness, to which it naturally approaches and from which it departs unnaturally. Since the upper place is defined even for fire, to which part of the place will each part of the fire move, and in that place it will remain naturally and will not depart from its proper place. For nothing moves naturally, as if longing for its proper place, and once it attains it, it must remain and be at rest. Thus, all fire will come to rest in the extreme place, naturally having the whole. If it were also moved in a circle, it would depart from the place naturally belonging to it and approach another place naturally, as its place is defined both for the whole and each of its parts. In this way, such a movement would not be continuous and composed of opposite movements, which is impossible for what moves in a circle.

42. Plethon deems these arguments unproven and otherwise impossible. Furthermore, with regard to Aristotle's arguments, which demonstrate the superiority of the nature of the heavens over that of other bodies, Plethon offers no counter, something that would be clear to any wise person. (To return to the initial point,) if, as Plato says in the Timaeus, the will of God, being greater than the natural bond of the heavenly bodies, preserves them indissoluble, although they have a nature to be dissolved, why did He not rather establish the nature of some body to be indissoluble from the very beginning, thereby making it superior to the nature of other bodies? The divine will is greater than the natural bond of bodies, but it is not inferior to the human proposition that every body is divisible and dispersible and can be dissolved by its nature, making it so that no body can improve its condition by itself. Therefore, if Plato thinks this is suitable for the divine will, to preserve the finest and highest of bodies from destruction, it is consistent with reason that such bodies should have been established with this nature from the beginning. The proposition will be true for all bodies except the heavens. The Philosopher brought a view consistent with Plato and reason, and innovative as befitting his own wisdom. The soul is immortal and indestructible, but the rational soul cannot immortalize what is naturally mortal. How can the human soul, being immortal, not immediately transform this mortal

body to its own immortality upon union? If the souls of the heavenly bodies are always united with them, but ours is bound to this mortal body, and will again be separated, then, with the body itself being mortal and the soul unable to immortalize it, it is so easily separated. Thus, the soul of the heavens, either immortalizing the heavenly body or, with the body being naturally indestructible, being eternally united with it, otherwise would be separated from it sooner. Since the soul cannot immortalize it, it will thus use it as a naturally indestructible body. For even if it were united with the body as a form, it could not fully transform it to its own immortality unless the first cause does so. It can only do so as a sailor is united with a ship, and altogether the mover is to the moved according to Plato, unless the sailor could preserve the ship from decay as long as he lives, and a soldier preserves his horse's life for himself. But these things are impossible.

43. If he claims that only the souls of the heavenly bodies can immortalize them, although these souls are not different in kind from human souls, how is it not reasonable to assume that the bodies of the heavens, being naturally immortal and not different in kind from mortal ones, do not need to be immortalized by the moving souls? Such bodies must be moved by such souls, and it would be the first cause that makes these souls and bodies superior by nature. I perceive no significant difference here between Plato and Aristotle. It makes no difference whether the heavenly bodies are immortal by the presence of the soul or by their own nature, and whether the soul moves them from within or from without by contact, as long as both assert that the heavens are superior to destruction unlike other bodies. Indeed, the concept of being immortalized by the soul is almost identical to being naturally immortal; for it would not be immortalized while still being mortal, nor would it acquire such a state over time, but it would immediately come into being and be moved and immortalized by the soul and be immortal, which is almost identical to being naturally such. Knowing the minimal difference here between the two philosophers, and assuming Aristotle speaks more consistently with reason and truth, and in accordance with sacred truth, I consider it unnecessary to add anything more to what has been said.

44. If what Aristotle said about the fifth element (the quintessence) was correct, then no one could justifiably criticize his views about heat, which the sun produces in the objects below it, as these views are consistent with and no less true than those previously demonstrated about the fifth element. And that they are consistent is clear. That they are also true is demonstrated by Aristotle's proofs, which Plethon did not dare to oppose, in which Aristotle shows that the cause of heat is motion resulting from activity, very easily. Therefore, he says that it suffices for the sun, moving in the objects below, to produce heat, and there is no need for it to be naturally hot like fire, so that nature does nothing in vain. For what can be done with fewer means is superfluous to achieve with more. And apart from this, he demonstrates sufficiently with signs that the motion of the heavenly body is heat-producing, and that it has some power to produce heat while moving, and that the bodies below it, having some similar power, are ignited by motion, from which both the power through motion and the activity produce heat. Therefore, it is not necessary to bring forth those proofs, since Plethon did not consider it worthy to oppose them, but those who study Aristotle's books on "On Sensation and the Meteorology" know them. We should wonder at Plethon, because he brings forth the moon against Aristotle, saying it does not produce heat by its motion, as if this alone could refute the Philosopher's opinion. For he does not simply say that motion produces heat, but that the fastest motion does. Thus, the most distant moving body, with a rapid motion, is prevented from producing heat; and the nearby moving body does not produce heat by being near, unless it is also moving rapidly, as the fastest

motion is sought for producing heat. If it were possible for the slowness of motion to be compensated by a shorter distance, as he says, how can we believe Plethon that this would apply equally to the moon and be proportional, and not that the lack of speed is much greater than the excess of proximity, so that they cannot be balanced? For it is not enough for Plethon to simply say this, but he must also demonstrate the compensation with reason, providing measures of both the lacking speed and the excess proximity, and proving their equal powers. Saying that bodies with some power to act do so more intensely when near is correct, but he does not thereby conclude what he wanted. For he would have concluded from this that the moon, according to Aristotle, produces heat by its motion, if Aristotle attributed the power of producing heat only to motion and not to the fastest motion. But since Aristotle attributes the cause of heat to the speed of motion, and says that the moon moves slowly, how did Plethon hope to conclude, according to Aristotle, that the moon produces heat by its motion, or that the sun, being the cause of heat, is so for any other reason than its motion? On the contrary, if bodies without the power to act do nothing when near or far, then the moon, having no power to produce heat, neither in itself nor accidentally, by no means, not being fire nor moving rapidly, whether near us or not, similarly does not produce heat.

45. Regarding the motion of the stars, which Aristotle said to be such as those who praise him and share his views also think, while others attempt to criticize him and conform his views to the opinions of others in various ways. I, however, do not wish to defend Aristotle's view contentiously, but rather to examine such matters with truth, nor would I easily believe that Aristotle and those who share his views thought worse of these matters than I do, as one who esteems them highly, unless I found the sacred teaching here convincing me otherwise than Aristotle's doctrines. For these reasons, I say that it seems to me, as it did to Plethon, that it is very inappropriate for the stars to move only by the motion of the spheres, being animate and according to Aristotle himself. However, Ptolemy, the mathematician, and most sacred teachers seem to me to speak better, he proving that they have their own motion besides that of the spheres, and they saying that the stars are not fixed to the firmament, although Moses seems to have stated this according to the custom of the Jews, saying things evident to the senses, but that each is moved by some intellectual beings, not united with them specifically, but by some contact of power, or as Plato also thought the souls united with the bodies. There is no difference for us who are enlightened by the truth in this from Plato, who said that every soul is united to bodies as the mover, and thus would say that heavenly bodies are animate, and we thinking that the souls of animals and plants are essentially united with them and as forms, call the heavenly bodies animate in a similar sense, being moved only by the contact of the intellectual natures, which even Aristotle seems to think, as he says in the eighth book of the Physics, although I do not know why he later says they are unmoved in themselves and only moved by the spheres, nor does he clearly recount the multitude of spheres and their motions anywhere beyond. Thus, Aristotle innovated wisely and well regarding the fifth element, and spoke better than most had before.

46. Since Plethon criticizes Aristotle even more heavily for saying in the third book of the Physics that art does not deliberate, and thereby slanders him as an atheist, we will show that this too was wisely said by Aristotle. But first, it is not unwise to set forth the Philosopher's goal, so that with this clearly in mind, Plethon's ignorance and falsehood may be evident to all. Showing in that part how nature acts for the sake of something, the Philosopher refutes those who hold the contrary, very well exposing the reasonings by which they were moved. First, he refutes those who are led by the mistakes of nature to think this way, who seem to

have been around Empedocles, overturning them with four arguments. Then he also refutes those who consider the agent and the matter sufficient for the composition of things by nature and who entirely reject the purpose as something empty, with third and final arguments, those who think nature does not act for the sake of something because it appears to deliberate, saying these are foolish, not understanding that art acts for the sake of something, but hardly deliberates about its works. This is clear from the craftsmen, who deliberate about things when they have nothing certain from art, but when they grasp something from the precision of art, they then proceed very confidently, as they are least likely to err. And it is generally clear that the most precise arts use deliberation the least regarding their works. For one who knows how to write would never deliberate about letters, for example, whether to write "ξ" by combining "ξ" and "υ", and how the rest of the elements are combined, or another way, and whether to write "ξ" in this way or another way; those who lack precision and therefore deliberate, once they grasp some certain principle of art, must stop deliberating and follow where it leads. Otherwise, a lyre player would sing very poorly and unmusically if he deliberated while touching each string.

47. Hence, it is clear that if something acts without deliberation, it does not act randomly and without an end, but because it has clear and determined means through which it acts, it lacks the need to deliberate. Thus, nature itself, proceeding towards the end through certain determined means in an orderly manner, would not need to deliberate, as if it were uncertain and doubtful. When he uses the example of art to refute the error of those men about nature, he shows that nature differs from art only in that the former has an internal principle of the things it produces, while the latter has an external one, excelling only in this respect. If shipbuilding were to operate within the wood in the manner of nature, a ship would be produced by nature, as it now is by art; and this would be particularly clear in the case of the art present in the accidentally moved, like one who heals himself; in this respect, nature most closely resembles art. Hence, it is clear that nature is a principle of a higher art embedded in things, by which they move towards a determined end, just as if a shipbuilder had the power to make the wood move of itself towards the form of a ship without needing anyone to introduce this from outside. Thus, since art is very similar to nature, if art, even without deliberation, acts for the sake of something, not through lack of reason but through excess of precision, advancing unhesitatingly towards the end through determined means, it is evident that nature, much more precise than art, acts for the sake of something even without deliberation.

48. Thus Aristotle responded very well and dialectically to the third group of those who wrong nature. Those who consider that everything that does not deliberate does not act for the sake of something and that nature is such, he refuted from the standpoint of art, showing its similarity to nature to support his refutation, thus easily affirming both the principle and the conclusion. Plethon, however, in his untimely ambition, appeared far inferior to himself in his arguments against Aristotle. First, he attacks the phrase: "If art were in the wood," he says, "it would not deliberate," as the Philosopher says, implying that it would act similarly to nature, using this to support the similarity in both. Then he claims that the most characteristic feature of art is deliberation, and if one were to remove this, art would no longer remain. But it is quite the opposite. For if by deliberation he means reasoning, then everything must reach its proper end through some intellect reasoning about them, that is, thinking and prefiguring the end within itself, as he says. But deliberation was not understood this way by either those who argue against nature or by Aristotle. Rather, it is commonly used in discourse and understood in its most proper sense. For deliberation is primarily a seeking

of reason about practical things, in which human life consists. Deliberation is a particular activity of reason, not about ends, but about the means conducive to ends, in which there is much uncertainty. It would be ridiculous to deliberate about ends, which are clear. For it is not for the general to deliberate whether it is beneficial to win, but how to best achieve victory in accordance with the law of the art of warfare. Nor does the merchant deliberate whether to profit, but how to pursue this end in accordance with the art.

49. Therefore, deliberation is not about the end itself, nor about all practical matters that lead to any end, but primarily about things for which there is no art, but rather some experience connected with the appropriateness or suitability becoming a conjecture, such as general matters beneficial to the city or concerning each individual with respect to the whole of life. There is no art by which someone, having learned it, could govern both public and private life without advisers. Hence, we need many advisers to gather what is necessary from many sources, and each one having some art for each practical matter, those who advise seem more trustworthy due to their arts, concerning both common matters and each individual's matters. Therefore, deliberation is about such matters and about those for which we have some art but cannot act accurately, either because the art itself does not fully allow precision due to its material, or because we ourselves, through negligence, have not yet grasped the full accuracy of it. As long as we can use art accurately, we would never deliberate about anything we need to do, as the reasoning of art directs. Thus, the builder would not deliberate whether it is necessary to work building or not, but as a man, he would deliberate so. Likewise, concerning the size or shape of the work, how much and what kind to prepare for it, the man who builds for himself will deliberate, as he happens to be a builder. But for someone else, who is about to perform the work, the builder will advise and not deliberate himself but will respond when asked each question if he is prudent and competent in building. However, even in these matters, the art does not serve as the basis. One who knows how to build, when he begins to work, will not deliberate about anything according to the art. Some things, even the most insignificant ones, will be done without deliberation. Neither will he deliberate whether it is necessary to dig the foundation first, nor whether to place the heavier stones below, nor spend time considering such matters. And if the builder does not deliberate about what he knows according to art, still less will a geometer deliberate about how to draw a triangle, or whether the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. But he will only consider whether these things are so when he does not yet possess the art. If it is beneficial to engage in geometry, the man, not the geometer, will deliberate. And as long as it seems better to him to engage in geometry, if the knowledge of some theorem is likely to benefit him, he will neither dispute nor deliberate. Hence, it is evident in all respects that art, as Aristotle also thinks, does not deliberate. And this is what most characterizes art: the ability to act without deliberation, as deliberation involves seeking, but the reason of art firmly dictates each thing. Therefore, it acts for the sake of something, as it possesses intellect and prudence. It does not need deliberation, as it is known by judgment, and it proceeds directly towards its proper end through clear and determined means, as is fitting. And it is much more likely that nature acts for the sake of something, being of greater intellect, and does not need deliberation at all, as it proceeds with certain judgment and greater and more precise reasoning power through determined means in an orderly manner, making it difficult to fail in achieving the end.

50. Plethon clearly calls deliberation the proposition of the end, and therefore says that both nature and art deliberate, and this is what makes both consistent. He seems to say that this end is the completion of the action. For he would not be so unaware that deliberation is not about the end but only about the completion

of the action, to which the end is immediately attached. For example, not whether it is beneficial to win, which is the end of warfare, but whether to engage in battle, which is the completion of all preparation for war. Nor whether it is beneficial to have a house protected from cold and heat, but what kind and how it should be constructed. Again, as Aristotle thinks that art does not deliberate, because its instruments and ministers do not deliberate, and nature because it is irrational, he himself says that art is in the architect, not in the instruments and ministers, and that the activity of nature is not in what seems irrational. Therefore, what Plethon says as if correcting Aristotle is taken from Aristotle himself. But concerning what he thinks Aristotle moved, the latter intended the opposite. For not out of irrationality, but out of precision and reasoning, he thinks that both nature in its productions and art in its constructions do not deliberate, and nature even more so. Aristotle was far from joining Anaxagoras, the progenitor of Plato's doctrines, or any of his more atheistic successors in atheism. But Plethon seems more likely to be an atheist, as he slanders so severely, or he feared the penalties placed by the divine on the wicked. That he is a slanderer, accusing the Philosopher of atheism, would need more proofs, which he left in all his books as not to impiety. But wishing to quickly escape Plethon's untimely criticisms, for reasons I mentioned earlier, it seems sufficient to quote from the Ethics addressed to Nicomachus, which first came to mind. He says there:

51. The one who acts according to reason, serves it, and maintains the best disposition appears to be most beloved by God. For if there is any care for human affairs by the gods, as it seems, it would be reasonable for them to take pleasure in the best and most akin to themselves. This would be the intellect, and those who love and honor it most would reciprocate, being cared for by them as friends and acting rightly and nobly. That all these qualities belong to the wise man is not unknown. Therefore, the wise man is most beloved by God and also likely the most blessed, so that the wise man would be the happiest.

52. And again: "Is prosperity then a form of divine care? Or would this not seem so? For we consider God to be the master who assigns both good and bad things to the worthy. But chance and what comes from chance truly occur as they may. If we attribute such things to God, we will make Him a poor judge. This is neither just nor fitting for God, but outside of this, one would place chance in nothing else. Therefore, it is evident that such things exist. Intellect, reason, and knowledge seem entirely alien. But neither care nor goodwill from God would seem to be prosperity because it occurs even in the wicked. It is not likely that God cares for the wicked." And again, "We consider the gods to be most blessed and happy." Then he adds shortly after, "Thus, the activity of God, surpassing in blessedness, would be contemplative."

53. These statements about Aristotle's reverence for the divine, which we genuinely uphold to the extent of Plato's, suffice, and no one would be persuaded by Plethon's slander after being convinced of these words by Aristotle. Nor would Plethon easily attempt anything against the meaning of these words, although he dares everything, since they are so clear and defeat any calumny.

54. Among other things, Plethon says that the worst thing the Philosopher ever stated is that some things happen without a cause. He claims Aristotle said this out of ignorance and necessity, as he could not otherwise reconcile it with his opinion about contingencies. Thus, he argues that Aristotle errs in three ways. First, he contradicts himself, not to mention all wise men and laymen, if he claims that everything that moves is moved by something else. Plethon takes this to show that Aristotle should have believed that everything that happens is caused by something, or rather that it is necessary to believe so. Second, he weakens the divine reputation, as people can easily assume this when seeing many occurrences without apparent causes, thinking

nothing happens without a cause. Third, he speaks unclearly, not showing what happens without a cause unless one says it is deliberation, which he claims to be the principle of future events in his arguments about propositions. This is false, for the surrounding circumstances also become the principle of deliberation.

55. Plethon adds these slanders and misunderstandings to his others. I will not now examine how Aristotle states that future events begin from deliberation and action, nor whether Plethon correctly or poorly explains the necessity by which he says the Philosopher was led to this contradiction, for the sake of brevity. This approach is fitting, as those weary from a long journey. But I will briefly show that the Philosopher rightly and consistently considers that some things happen without a cause.

56. That everything that comes into being must do so through some cause is clearly stated by Aristotle in the ninth book of the Metaphysics and in many other arguments. Therefore, Plethon's efforts are in vain, as Aristotle has indeed stated this, and he tries to prove that Aristotle should have said it if he did not deny that everything in motion is moved by something. If Aristotle says that some things come into being without a cause, he means cause in a specific sense and coming into being in a more general and confused sense. For the natural generations, where everything coalesces, and everything necessary for the constitution of things by nature is present, these are called generations in the primary sense. In cases where not everything coalesces, he calls them creations, and calls things that reach existence in any way whatsoever becoming in a general sense, but becoming through nature in a primary sense. Thus, he calls a cause in a general sense everything that contributes to the existence of anything but distinguishes what is called a cause in a primary sense, given the multifaceted notion of causes, all of whose differences must be defined by anyone who is to philosophize genuinely. Among other differences, he primarily calls the immediate cause the cause of each thing. For though he calls the first cause simply the cause in the Metaphysics, the immediate cause is primarily the cause, as it is peculiar to itself. Therefore, in the eighth book of the Physics, he says: "We must state the nearest causes; what is the matter? Not fire or earth, but the peculiar matter." Again, showing what kind of cause the mover should be in the ninth book: "Everything that comes into being comes from something and by something, and this something by which it comes into being is, of course, in form, and it must be prior in actuality." He says the same in the seventh book: "Generally, things come into being from what has nature and from what is according to nature. For what comes into being with a nature, such as a plant or an animal, and from what has a nature according to its form, is similar in kind, though in another. For man begets man." He always says the creative cause of things that come into being by nature must be in actuality and similar in kind to what is coming into being, like man begetting man. He also says the seed is somehow creative, having the form of what is begetting, even if in potentiality, and being somehow synonymous with the begetter.

57. Since some things come into being both from seeds and without seeds, he says those coming into being without seeds do so spontaneously. The cause of the spontaneous in the constitution of nature is the power of the whole, which can move this motion that the seed moves. Thus, plants that the earth spontaneously produces without receiving seeds and many animals without seeds or similar cause come into being, like wasps and worms. These do not come into being as from no cause, nor without any creative cause at all, but he attributes their coming into being to spontaneity, which is as close as possible to nature. He primarily considers what generally happens in nature to be the primary cause; for the rest of the things, except for a few, he considers immediate causes, which are similar in kind, either having the form in actuality or in potentiality, like seeds. He says those things become primarily what come into being this way, and these

alone have a creative cause, either immediately moving the matter or instilling its form. Those not coming into being this way do not entirely enjoy the specific reason of things coming into being by nature, except that they are not always shown to be so. This attribute of everything in generation and decay, having no creative cause as things by nature do, being immediate and of the same form, he calls these things spontaneous. Though these also come from some matter and from higher-moving causes, which condition the matter somehow to produce these, with no immediate cause moving and imparting its form, as happens with everything else, Aristotle did not deny this at any time and mentioned it everywhere. Thus, holding this view, he does not contradict the common and self-evident principle that everything coming into being comes from something. Nor does he contradict those who know well, as everything he says is consistent with each other and the truth. For everything coming newly into existence must come from some cause, at least from the motion of the higher bodies, and everything coming into being by nature must do so through some creative cause, which must be immediate and similar in form, either in potentiality or actuality. And again, some things coming into being without the said cause or harmonizing with everything by nature, as things coming without seed and parent, both animals and plants. This same happens with things made by art, as often some things similar to those made by art occur without the activity of art, as if someone striking to remove it would break a tumor and heal it. Or what once happened to a painter, as they say, who painting a horse accidentally threw a sponge, and foam was imprinted on the horse's mouth by chance. Some have benefited from poisons for the opposite of what the poisoners intended. These things occur with things made by art by resemblance to things made by nature. For art always follows nature.

58. Just as a tumor is said to be healed spontaneously, not because it is without any cause, but because it happens without the presence of its proper cause, so also those things that are said to happen spontaneously do not happen without any cause but without their proper and natural cause fitting their kind. Thus, they rightly receive the name spontaneous. How, Plethon, do these things involve any contradiction, or how do they undermine the divine reputation, if not rather support it, showing the excessive wisdom of the first cause in the variety of things coming into being, directing both natural and artificial things in many ways? Aristotle would indeed undermine the divine reputation if he posited that everything comes into being without a cause and spontaneously, although you dared to attach this to him; but you achieved nothing. Thus, one who knows neither nature nor the things happening by it, nor the Aristotelian expression, has thought that Aristotle contradicts himself and endangers the divine reputation. Moreover, since Aristotle did not provide examples of things happening spontaneously in nature, but revealed his aim with many proofs, considering everyone could easily discover and invent from their own experiences, he did not wish to undertake a superfluous effort. You, except for deliberation, would never have recognized Aristotle to be speaking about anything else in those arguments. For what connection does deliberation have with things happening by nature? Barely, if your philosophy were similar, and trying to reveal what he means, would you be led to consider deliberation as an example of things happening without a cause in nature. Thus, you understand Aristotle's arguments well.

59. Therefore, understanding this and being bold besides, what was left but to try to contradict? But Plethon can only persuade the uneducated with his arguments against Aristotle. I, however, use this rule for both these examined points and most of Aristotle's arguments where he seems to differ from Plato. By adhering to this rule, I believe I can discern philosophical differences and never stray from the true opinion

about each or engage in slander. This rule is that I find Plato generally and vaguely using his arguments, either because he deemed it appropriate to mix rhetoric with philosophy or thought it better to philosophize this way. Aristotle, however, uses his arguments precisely, clearly, and appropriately, fitting for a philosopher and a guide to philosophy. Thus, Aristotle, considering motion within natural change occurring in moving beings, does not think things remaining the same are moved. Plato, describing motion as the transition from being to activity, does not hesitate to apply it to unchanging beings. Regarding the heavens, too, in what is eternal and what is generated, in almost everything, Aristotle uses the proper, primary, clear, and determined concepts, while Plato uses the general and somehow approximate ones. Plato consistently uses this method everywhere, while Aristotle, when discussing specific things, maintains the mentioned method. Still, he also sometimes imitates Plato's confusion, mixing everything with what is becoming, so that it is never a cause of error unless someone is entirely devoid of reason and logical methods. I mentioned such things in the beginning of this work. So, given these philosophers' approaches, who would prefer the elder over the younger or escape scrutiny from those who adhere to the better and more precise?

60. Additionally, Plethon says it is foolish of Aristotle not to allow for motion to be twofold and homonymous. He gives an argument for its dual nature and thinks he can refute Aristotle for having such a belief. Although I could demonstrate Plethon's foolishness and Aristotle's wisdom and consideration more extensively, I will do this briefly, first presenting Aristotle's opinion on motion.

61. Movement in general, according to Aristotle, belongs to those things that are spoken of in many ways. It appears to be opposed to common perception, to indicate some continuity in magnitude, and besides these, to signify something unfinished in the nature of the thing, which makes it difficult to classify it under any genus. For it affects perception, it might be a quality. As it extends with the extension of magnitude, it might be classified under quantity. As it signifies something unfinished, it might be related to completeness, towards which it tends and which is the limit of movement, for the unfinished and the finished are clearly in the same genus. Apart from all these, it signifies the progression towards the being of the becoming thing, starting from potentiality and ending in actuality, unless it is interrupted. This is the way things constituted by nature come into existence, and this is how the Philosopher, in the third book of the Physics, considers movement to be in the genus of actuality, calling it incomplete actuality and that by which something becomes actual, having been entirely potential before. As it clearly belongs to the moving and suffering thing, it is fitting to call it a passion and a result of the agent's action. In distinguishing the potential from the similar complete actuality towards which it tends, it is reasonable to also call it actuality. Otherwise, it is not more actualized than actualizing, as it inherently has the nature to be moved in this way, even if something else introduces the principle of motion from outside, thus cooperating with the mover and contributing to its completion. Therefore, movement is homonymously said in general. There is no definite genus of movement, but it encompasses almost all genera. Taken separately, each way is synonymously said and considered, like that which affects perception is in the genus of quality, and similarly for others.

62. When considering specific movements, each naturally existing movement is one in number and reason, being an incomplete actuality and a preliminary to complete actuality, taking its existence in the suffering subject, deriving its unity from the unity of the subject if it is continuous. It is also grasped by reason, being defined in two ways, by the reason of actuality and passion. Movement is like a middle term between two limits, the former being potentiality and the latter being actuality. This is the order of all things

from the unfinished to the complete, from potentiality to actuality. The reason of cause and end immediately accompanies these, for nothing can be led from potentiality to actuality without some cause acting and aiming at some end, which is appropriate to both the agent and the suffering nature.

63. Therefore, since there are two external natures, the acting and the one undergoing the work, two categories arise from them, namely, energy and passion, just as in many other instances the categorical distinctions are derived from external things. These two categories are partially predicated of motion; the doing or acting is the energy of the agent, from the agent's perspective, while the suffering is the energy of the patient, from the patient's perspective. Consequently, motion is one in actuality but is defined in two ways due to the twofold term. Energy and passion are two categories, each showing the difference in their terms. The agent from which motion arises and the patient in which it occurs are different in actuality, having a dual nature, sometimes numerical and sometimes generic. These being actualities, energy belongs to the agent, passion to the patient, and they are distinguished similarly in actuality. Motion is an energy in itself of what is potentially and incomplete, looking towards the limits it encompasses, and it is both passion and energy. The former is called by adding "from which," and the latter by adding "in which." Consequently, even in the category of energy and passion, motion is not included, but rather is a substrate for them, and they exist as attributes of it, as stated.

64. This is Aristotle's view on motion. If there are two powers regarding motion, the active in the mover and the passive in the moved, Plethon says each must have its corresponding energy. We agree with this, knowing that every power must have some corresponding energy and that powers being distinct, their energies must also be distinct. But we say the energy corresponding to the active power is to produce motion, and to the passive power, to receive it. Aristotle also considers these energies, from which he distinguishes the genera of acting and suffering. But motion, which is the becoming actual of what is potential, starts from the agent and ends in the patient, not corresponding to those powers but rather underlying the energies that complete those powers, and thereby, in some way, to the powers themselves. Therefore, it happens that even Plethon must distinguish energies and have two categories, passion and energy. However, motion, although it is the energy of the agent, is primarily the actuality of the patient, as it exists in the patient. Although Plethon calls motion active in the mover, to which as moved it previously had the power, it should be considered not as the mover but as the moved. It is not energy but rather an incomplete energy, not according to that which already has and began to move. For that is not even motion but rather the cessation of motion and the beginning of another, the creative one, as each agent acts upon another according to its actuality and imparts to another the form it has. Therefore, the Philosopher says that the incomplete energy, which is motion, exists only in the patient as its substrate, so that if it were also in the mover, everything moving would be moved and the primary principle of all would be abolished, which must be unmoved and move others. Plethon says this fear is baseless; it may be baseless for him due to his lack of understanding of the principles of motion. But Aristotle, intending to make the strongest proof of the divine, reasonably feared to place motion in the mover, lest nothing would be unmoved, as motion would exist in everything. Instead, he considered it sufficient for motion to come from and be caused by the mover. He knew very well its nature, that wherever it is present, it causes change and action from elsewhere. Considering that everything except the first mover must have this, he knew that it required demonstration whether there must be something first among movers, not just dictating it. He examined what was consistent with reason and thus thought it

necessary to place motion in every mover and not to seek the first mover anymore, nor to drive the progression in movers to infinity or to allow motion to exist in none to prove the unmoved principle.

65. Having established the reasoning that the mover must be unmoved, and assigning motion in a manner suitable to all things that move, Aristotle rejects the idea that motion exists in the mover, as it contradicts his principle. For if motion were in the mover, and motion exists in anything that moves, then everything that moves would be moved by something else. Thus, there would be no first mover. However, reasoning shows that there must be a first unmoved mover, as it is not necessary to proceed to infinity. Therefore, motion should not be in the mover but as in the moved, and its active aspect, when the moved begins to be moved by it. For just as the moved changes in receiving motion actively, so does the mover in producing it actively. Therefore, if one must speak the truth, Aristotle did not fear only undermining the divine reputation but also being considered ignorant or dismissing the strongest proof of the divine. These points would neither serve the natural discourse nor achieve the contrary. Who does not know Aristotle's argument about motion, stated in the third book of the Physics, where the doctrine examined now is established, suitable to all naturally constituted things and fitting only for them, which are not entirely free from natural change? Presented differently, it would fit hardly well.

66. However, that each motion is said to be one in the subject, beginning from the agent and bringing the form from it, implanted in the patient and conditioning it as if the form is breathed in, and that its unity does not contradict the distinction of the agent and the patient, in which and from which acting and suffering exist, could be proven with many arguments, both those Aristotle uses and others supplementing from that wealth. But what is now presented is sufficient as a brief historical exposition of his view, from which Plethon's argument is shown to have no necessity.

67. Plethon appears incongruent in another way, too, as he states that active and passive motion, which he considers the energy of both agent and patient, are homonymous, while criticizing Aristotle for refusing to speak synonymously about energy and passion. I do not think he can provide a reason for categorizing motion homonymously by energy and passion and being synonymously said by them. He cannot explain why motion and being should be equally said of all beings, as Plato's followers like.

68. However, it was unnecessary to leave Plethon's argument unrefuted in this part, but it would be excessive to refute it too forcefully, even if he rashly opposed Aristotle. We do not believe it should be the same. He does not slander as in previous points and also defends Plato in matters where he seems to have an opinion. We should forgive Plato if he did not entirely deviate from truth and Aristotle's view, but seemingly unintentionally missed the philosophical precision. If Aristotle, considering motion in the context of natural discourse, either removing it from the first cause, which must exist without any change and do everything, and thus not allowing it in the mover, considering it as in the subject (the patient), if Aristotle says this, and Plato regards motion in each activity, saying the divine is moved by itself and moves all things, such a view hardly opposes Aristotle's arguments about the immutability of the first principle. Plato, taking motion confusedly and generally, applies it to both changing and unchanging things, making everything at once. Aristotle deserves praise for properly giving each thing its due and philosophizing genuinely. Plato, however, deserves understanding for missing precision but not evidently harming truth in this part.

69. This much then on the matter. Since the argument concerning ideas is still left, for me, who defends Aristotle as Plethon defends Plato, it remains to be examined later. Whether these ideas were proposed by

BOOK TWO AGAINST PLETHON

Aristotle, or Plato, or neither, given the clear opinions of both from their writings, we shall defer to another time, as it is a subject of great importance. Although this discussion has touched upon them many times, we will say this much now: if Aristotle refutes Plato's opinion, or if he posits the existence of ideas themselves, then Aristotle is in agreement with the right-thinking people, and Plethon is opposed, defending Plato's opinion. If Aristotle does not even allow ideas to exist in the divine intellect, while Plato sets better things but deviates from the truth, Aristotle would thus seem truly inferior to Plato, and Plethon would also find the same difficulty in affirming or refuting Plato. But when we address the argument about ideas more fully, this will become clear. Then it will also be clear whether Plethon should have agreed with Plato's position on ideas and refuted Aristotle. That Plethon has argued well against appearances and for them, collecting and summarizing many things discovered by others before him, is evident. It would be unfair not to praise the man, although he deserves praise for many other reasons, having attacked Aristotle as no other contemporary Greek I know could. Although it is not sufficient to surpass him, he is better than many others of lesser ability. But one must strive in every endeavor to be as excellent and precise as possible. I believe Plethon deserves universal goodwill if he currently excels most other Greeks. Even if I had to oppose him, I would do so with reverence, expecting the same goodwill towards me from him and all others. But first, Aristotle's insults provoked me to respond, something least fitting to my disposition but suitable to my strong defense of Aristotle's rights, also given by the proverb. Thus, Plethon rightly bears the cause of both his insults and those received.

70. Next, our holy laws command us to defend our faith in the divine and to oppose those who resist it. Plethon has accepted such accusations from many credible people, claiming to have encountered his work promising the best legislation. Extracting parts of it, they show it is full of the old Greek nonsense. They also think the style supports their view, which is hard not to believe if one knows how to judge such things. They claim the book was signed by Plethon, whether to remain anonymous, to care much about the Hellenism in its title, or for some other reason, and they explain more reasons to us. They were keen to know these things.

71. Many say such things about Plethon, which are hard to disbelieve, and for this reason and my affection for Aristotle, I have been compelled to use him more heavily in this work. If this is so, and Plethon has written a book presenting the best legislation, let him send it to us. It might benefit those persuaded by reason and wrong to hide it, appearing to lack confidence in it. Plethon himself would derive one of two benefits from showing it. He would either be praised by the most esteemed contemporary Greeks or, realizing some error, return to the truth he seems to love, benefiting and being pleased, and grateful to those who helped him achieve this good. Otherwise, he will be deprived of both benefits and not fear the threats regarding his writings on Aristotle, showing more about the greater work they say exists, with much labor likely spent on it. Its subject seems far more sacred than the current one. If all these accusations are indeed false, likely fabricated out of envy, and Plethon is truly holy and believes nothing more dignified or truthful than Christ's legislation, I would not disdain to acknowledge him as my teacher. I would not be persuaded by slandering Aristotle, except in a few cases where I know he too suffered human weakness. I will not learn anything contrary to what I know and am convinced by reasoning, nor will I ever be driven by contentiousness to oppose him, knowing that even if he holds the lesser opinion in some things, in the most important matters, which are indispensable for future happiness, he is with the truth. Loving him for his character, which he took care to use most excellently, and his wisdom, yielding to no contemporary thinker.

72. A most convincing sign of his piety and the wickedness of the slanderers will be if he writes to one of his friends, stating that he neither is Plethon, nor knows any Plethon who has written against our faith, nor does he believe that anyone can find anything better or holier than the doctrines and laws of Christ revealed by God. He considers Greek superstition contemptible and those deceived by it laughable. By refuting these slanderers with this, which alone can persuade us, he will gain many great advantages. He will hear praise for his words in the present writing and no longer hear the slander that the slanderers crafted against Plethon. The divine will support him in his defense and dispel any suspicion against him if he stops slandering Aristotle. By placing himself in the ranks of sophists due to his boasts about logical methods, he could respond to the opponents regarding Archytas and Plato's dialectic, showing that they have little in common with Aristotle's methods. This will show that he holds the eternal substances as spontaneous, thus refuting one of the criticisms, which many others will also address, showing it to be a true sophism and slander. The second criticism we have very easily refuted, or rather Aristotle himself has refuted, in many ways we previously mentioned, and in the second book of the Physics and elsewhere harshly reproaches those who say the heavens are spontaneous. These were, as it seems, the followers of Democritus. For if he reproaches those who say the heavens are spontaneous and posit no cause for it, like for animals and plants, it is clear he believes the heavens and the entire world were created, even if not at a specific time, by a determined and ordained creative cause, which would be the intellect or something greater than the intellect, if he concedes that the cause of animals and plants is either nature or intellect or something else of this kind. Therefore, those who think otherwise are clearly slanderers.

73. To slander such things is not beneficial either to Plethon himself or to anyone else, nor is it just according to Aristotle to attempt to portray an author as inferior and ignorant because he has erred somewhere in his pursuit of truth, unless someone would also deign to do the same to Plato, in whose works far worse and much more inferior elements are interwoven than in Aristotle's. If someone should feel the need, for the sake of practice and argument, to undertake such a task against the truth, this is permissible; yet one must immediately reveal the truth, or not compose those writings at all, or specify that they have been crafted solely for the sake of argument. Our wise Plethon did nothing of the sort, but rather sought to instill in all people a low opinion of Aristotle, his art, and his doctrines. Why he was so eager to slander and how he hoped to convince everyone, I leave aside for the moment. He gathered many things against Aristotle over a long period, and when he finally was able to compile them into one book, he composed and published it without hesitation.

TO THE EPHESIAN, GEORGE

II. Letter Accompanying the Previous Work to Marc of Ephesus.

† To the Ephesian, George.

1.I send to you the book that I have now written concerning Aristotle. The reason for my writing it, you will hear from the book itself, though it is open to anyone who wishes to criticize it. For my part, I had every reason to be concerned with this matter. It was not, however, an exhibition of wisdom—for I see no occasion for such a display unless one intends to jest with children or with listeners who are no better than children—while you are occupied with your own affairs, or rather, with the affairs of God, and have long since condemned our trifling pursuits. Nor did I wish to censure that wise man (Aristotle), for I have never been envious of any of the good; rather, I reproach myself whenever I perceive that I have erred in many ways from what is fitting. Yet I am deeply grieved by the foolishness of those like me, though I rejoice, as God knows, whenever I perceive any virtue in others, as much as if I myself were adorned with it. Nor would I ever have troubled Gemistus (Plethon), had not my conscience stirred me from within. You know how one ought to regard such matters, unless we are to endure the confusion of Anaxagoras. Yet some say that he (Gemistus) is pious in his views concerning the divine, and that he neither teaches nor writes any new legislation in which our traditions are ridiculed, but that we, out of malice, have stirred up such rumors against him—rumors which time will prove to be utterly false. In other respects, the man is useful, and in the elegance of his Greek style, he is second to none. We know that even Cicero and many others from abroad took great care to cultivate this style in Athens, though they were already filled with the inspiration of their native Muse and knew well how to sing beautifully. He has also gathered much of the other wisdom, and for the sake of character, he might even serve as an example to the younger generation, who genuinely care for virtue. You know the man better than I do. For these reasons, I would have refrained from criticizing him, even in what he has written against Aristotle. Moreover, it is not highly commendable to scrutinize the labors of others, but rather to demonstrate what is true. Philosophy offers countless opportunities for those who wish to display their talents, in which one may excel without offending any friends. For my part, I have never willingly chosen to grieve anyone. If I have the least share in dialectical methods—which, indeed, has been the cause of his error and that of many others—it is because there has long been a scarcity of such methods in our schools, and ignorance of them is not his fault alone but a common ailment of our race. For this reason, those who pursue the hunt for truth without the proper tools are filled with ignorance and error and rightly retreat.

2.But I have forgotten myself, making excuses where none are needed. For who knows my intentions better than you? I believe even my parents, who shared all my thoughts, might one day learn them from you. For as they sowed the seeds of my nature, so you have sown in me the seeds of reason and character. They did so once, but you cultivated me for a long time, so that you might recognize your own work, knowing the images of these things within me. For this reason, I must rather excuse myself for having been led to make such excuses.

3.Many have already heard of this book among us, and the report of it has even reached our distant friends, who always delight in our discourses. They hope to find us better here than before, as though we have taken hold of a noble subject, and for this reason, they insist that it be sent to them. But I judged it necessary

that it first be presented to the standard of your skill, and only then appear to all others. For even if there were many among us who could judge such matters as well as you, it was fitting to present it to you before all others, both out of goodwill and because of the kinship of our discourses, as you would attend to it most excellently. Indeed, in skill, you now surpass all among us. What, then, could be more valuable than such a standard, which neither ignores nor conceals the irregularities in our arguments? Therefore, after you have carefully examined all of this, mark what seems to you not well said and give your judgment. Concerning two friends, I would not even venture to ask, though I know well that you are thoroughly devoted to Aristotle and admire only what is fitting in Plato. But if it is necessary to send such works to friends, or else to give them to the fire, let them judge the truth of the arguments as each sees fit. For me, your judgment alone will suffice in place of all others.

TO PLETHON

III. Letter to Gemistos Plethon Concerning His Work Against the Latins (1450).

† From Scholarius, Later Known as Gennadius, to Plethon, in Response to His Book in Favor of the Latins or Against the Greeks.

1. I have received your letter, dearest and wisest of friends, in which you said that you love me and that you are neither angry nor inclined to anger, and you mentioned sending a book to the most divine emperor, written in response to my earlier work defending Aristotle. Immediately, however, a book of yours against the Latins came to light, in which you seemed to forget us and even to be somewhat resentful. For you were not unaware that we, both in word and deed, lay claim to this matter among the powerful, and that if any support were to come to us from anywhere, we would seize it with pleasure, as is natural, and give thanks to the one who provided it. This, then, you did well, and without expecting it from you, the matter sought our hands above all. What you said you had written in response and that we should take it from there, if we so desired, the most divine emperor did not give to us, caring more, as I would say, for you and your reputation, since he saw you engaged in these arguments, praising your moderation and dignity, and wishing you to appear thus to all in what you do. For the weakness or strength of arguments, I think, should be left to others to consider; indeed, even he does not concern himself with such things now. But how and why it has fallen into the hands of others, I do not know (for such a virtue of arguments ought to be made public and not hidden), nor has it yet been given by any of them, nor has it been of any use to me to obtain it, to tell the truth. Perhaps someone will give it to me even without my asking, either to please or to grieve me, depending on their knowledge and judgment of such matters and of me. And I, having now increased my opinion of these matters and of my own works, as I think, but due to the harshness of those arguments and the fact that they were directed not elsewhere but against my own works, as if to trample or disparage them, I refrained from responding, or from doing anything else that might have been devised for the sake of tearing down rather than healing some pride. For I have always admired you, among other things, for your wisdom and skill in the art of discourse. For it is difficult for you, for me, and for anyone to grasp the truth in opinions about all things while we are in this body; but to be able to demonstrate what seems true, as far as possible, and to refute arguments, we consider those who know how to do this to differ from those who do not. If anything was threatened against me in the preface of that book or in any of the letters, I will refrain from it now, not because I think you could never justly refute my book (for I knew this even before), but because I intended to write something in response to your arguments, or to examine them in some other way that would be fitting for both philosophers and for you, perhaps in agreement with one of them.

2. Therefore, it is not for this reason, or because I should disregard what you have written in response, as if it were not done according to law or in earnest (for I do not wish to grieve you further by saying such things), but because I owe you greater thanks for what you have written against the Latin book, that I do not now oppose you. And if I should have remained silent, content with those earlier works, I will now remain silent and refrain from these second difficulties of yours altogether. For whether Plato appears better than Aristotle because of you, where before he did not seem so in all things, or whether Aristotle is preserved through me, maintaining the reputation he has long held among the many and the wise, it matters little to me. And whether we both seem able to speak effectively in defense of the arguments we uphold, or whether

neither aids the other well, but this is seen only as a display by those who judge, I do not care so much at present. Concerning the truth in such matters, we cannot be judges for one another, nor can we trust others to judge, since all are subject to the same passion, some favoring one philosopher and others the other, and neither side can be impartial arbiters for the other. As for insults and such indecency, who would compete in such things? For no one would wish even their enemies to have the upper hand in such matters, much less themselves, if they are sensible and moderate, unless some divine and unavoidable cause compelled them to begin such things.

3. To these matters, then, and such things, I now pay the least attention. But concerning the preservation of our ancestral piety, pleasing both God and all prudent men, or, as if it were of no importance, abandoning it for the sake of false opinions and other matters, leading to impiety, this has long been and, God willing, will continue to be of great concern to me, so that the latter may not happen to many. For it is not for our own sake (God forbid that I should say such a thing) that we fear this, but for the sake of those things for which we were once envied by many, and which we have gladly relinquished. For it seems it was not possible to enjoy those things well and to persuade others by word and deed to be sensible. There are now among us not a few such persons, whom you yourself said you feared, but as for the Latins ever surpassing us and our arguments, we are far from fearing that, so much so that we would not exchange piety and human honor for it, as some do not hesitate to babble, while the facts themselves contradict them, truly showing the intention and power of little dogs, who, pouring out their anger in insults, as those do in barking, achieve far less in necessary matters than they exceed in the superfluous and worse. If they are indignant for the sake of some embassy, we will not hesitate to compare them to foxes and Actaeon's hounds. But you have always been friendly to our race and the Church in these disputed matters, and never burdensome in any way, and now you have shown this with the greatest proof; so that even if you were previously overlooked by some, those who attempt to slander you can no longer point to the ignorance or malice of others concerning you. How, then, would it be just for me to attempt to oppose or envy one who has so usefully allied himself with us in the greatest and most intimate matters? For if you freed me from two lawsuits by pleading my case in the greatest one, which I would have traded for all my possessions to win, and in the other, where I needed to suffer almost no harm, you either plotted against me or sided with my accuser, would it be gracious of me, having thanked you for the good you sought to do, to remember the slightest wrong and attempt to retaliate? Far from it. Even if you did not do this for our sake, but for the sake of truth and justice and many other things that concern you no less than us, we ought thus, without considering our own interests, to repay one who benefits the common good, even if we have some private grievance against him, and though we could refute him, we do not.

4. Therefore, for these reasons, nothing will be written in response to your works, whatever they may seem to have been at any time. Instead, I will allow you to enjoy what you have improvised against Aristotle and us, as those who have seen them say, whether to defend yourself or to make a display, as it may be a pastime for you and for those who would most gladly watch you wrestle with anger and shouting, though you are nearly exhausted. For it does not seem to us as it does to the Cumaeans; and what is more, I would concede to you that both Plato and Aristotle talk nonsense alike. For what benefit would there be if one of these two were more highly esteemed, when neither of them was able to attain the most profitable truth, or was not deemed worthy of it? This has been the cause for both themselves and others to err concerning

other matters, which are of lesser importance to humanity, each missing the mark in different ways. But if they could indeed be useful to those who use them, this could also be obtained from others, with a choice that is not easier for the many but with less effort. These are the ones who have been illuminated by the light of sacred teaching, having set this wisdom as a kind of pedagogue for themselves, and they have become far better than Aristotle, Plato, and their like, and they make those who engage with their books similar to themselves. And many have become such through them, so that they surpass not only those mentioned but even Hermes, Apollo, the Muses, and all to whom Greek wisdom is attributed, by a great measure. For the works of the Greeks, who were foremost in wisdom, were worse than those of the most ordinary and base individuals, since they could not, through their engagement with the sensible world, bring humanity to the participation in the higher and the pursuit of the truly beautiful, even if they speculated about it theoretically without ever truly grasping it or engaging with it through the senses. And concerning the intelligible, they had no clear knowledge of anything about which one might have a firm hope, but they practiced the study of the divine as if it were another science, and much worse, with far less certainty. They supposed that there were some things far superior to the visible, but such things as each had conceived from myths or their own presuppositions and principles, which they believed to be truer than others. But they themselves were not unaware that they had no reliable knowledge about these matters, except insofar as they used the errors of ordinary people, relying on oracles and the hints derived from them, not so much deceived as willingly lacking in what is truer and better. For the deception of the demons was evident. For this reason, it is not surprising that almost all of them demonstrated works inconsistent with the promise of their lives, and they gained nothing from their cloaks and the idle talk in the stoas or peripatetic walks, so that if anyone, they themselves would be the ones entering the bodies of donkeys and other beasts along with their philosophy and fine speculations, if the transmigrations of souls and the discourses about them were true.

5. But the leaders of our holy faith, from that blessed dispensation of the higher until even the longest time, not only lived better than their own discourse and the wiser among them, but better than all discourse, as was fitting for those who followed the wisdom of God Himself, which deigned to associate with humanity. Some of them did not even know the beginning of letters, numbers, celestial observations, or natural science; for they considered the knowledge of these things and the passions associated with them to be of no importance, since they disdained their enjoyment, and they did so rightly. For if knowledge of such things leads to despising them, for those who have understanding, and to loving the beauty that is above all these, which is still invisible, why should they labor for such knowledge when they could, by the easiest and most just path and with firm experience, become lovers of the Beloved there, as far as it is possible? Others knew these things but used them no more than those who did not, except when it was necessary to refute those who boasted of this vain study alone and to show that what seemed to oppose the sacred truth was as it ought to be shown, so that they could not boast or, out of ignorance of better things, mock the true philosophers who were devoted to the knowledge of appearances. But all together found the true wisdom with such zeal, not without its guidance, and having found it, they honored it so much that they were willing to die and did die throughout their lives for it and its laws, which is far greater than having lived according to it precisely. Such as they were, they did not merely say that philosophy is the practice of death, or practice it in the absence of death and the far worse evils of the body, while rebelling in deed, but they demonstrated their choice more by deeds than by words. They philosophized in this way not only individually but also made

others like themselves, and their number is almost impossible to count. For whole cities and entire nations embraced and practiced this highest choice, not over a long time but immediately, casting off every hindrance and the charms of this life, as if they had never been delighted by them, immediately forgetting them for the drink of true life. And I think that not only among all people of all time but even among all who have ever existed, as the Greeks supposed, so many have not philosophized and demonstrated their choice in deed as those who in one city, in one day, philosophized (the cruelty of the executioner, who sought their bodies, did not prevail to turn the blessed from their right mind and firm hope in it), or as those who in one generation, in one place, under one guide, if it so happened, truly philosophized and were brought to the polity of the blessed in heaven.

6. Who would not be astonished to consider the multitude of those seized by the truth, from the time it desired to turn humanity to itself? So far is the philosophy according to Christ from being compared to that of any human or all humans together, both in the number of those improved and the speed of their improvement, that it might even risk rendering this world vain (many place the end of its creation in humanity and in many things outside it, even if not of the whole, yet of all that are the principles of what exists in it), and the generations, lives, and pursuits of humanity would be added to all time in vain, if God had not so arranged the manifestation of the supernatural truth that, even when revealed and still hidden to the duller, it both seemed to draw away from the supernatural nature of its teachings no less than the manner of its teaching, and through the paradoxes it worked, it drew all to itself, so that a great swarm of humanity came at once to the knowledge of the truth and the virtue that leads to communion with the divine.

7. Therefore, it was not overlooked that human affairs and all that exists and happens for the sake of humanity should come to the most necessary and best end, which the will of the Creator originally intended, as was fitting. Therefore, when the school of Christ was opened, since it had to be opened at some time, the natural and earthly speculations about the supernatural gave way, and the sacred doctrines were implanted in humanity, and these were in harmony with the deeds of those who held them. And the power of the demons was no longer anywhere; but the name of Jesus, who overthrew it, prevailed against them and all the infirmities of nature, and the long-standing friendship of humanity with these harmful things was dissolved, and the path to heaven was filled daily with those ascending to God, countless from all the world, some from the struggle for Christ, others from the diligent study of His laws, departing with much hope and foretastes of the future blessed life. And all that opposed this best innovation was proved to strive in vain; but the power of Christ was wonderfully perfected in the natural weakness of those who believed in Him. And nature was convicted by the greater power that overcame it in miracles; and the natural reason gave way to the supernatural persuasions, with some persuasive grace from God poured into the souls of humanity.

8. The sacred books are filled with such narratives and doctrines, and most of them are not devoid of the grace found in their discourse. They have escaped the harmful elements of Aristotle and Plato, while offering delight to those who handle them without burden or danger, no less than those philosophers. We use the Fathers as examples, being closer to the dispensation of those good things, when even Plato's myths still had some persuasiveness, or, if you will, even all his followers after Aristotle, with their false and shadowy dignity. But they, illuminated by the light of the truth in Christ, which surpasses and extinguishes that superstition and drives it beyond the borders, believed that it was necessary to be saved not only by the necessities of events and divine inspirations but also by the judgment of reason. And as we use them as examples and

infallible standards of the more sober hopes for our blessedness, we would not grieve excessively if Aristotle and Plato were refuted by one another. Rather, we would rejoice that their dullness in higher matters is exposed by those enlightened by Christ. Yet I have also heard some more sacred words granting them a certain pardon. But if some now renew the rotten nonsense of the Greeks, they say that such people wallow in inexcusable falsehood. For after the brilliant demonstration of the monarchy of God, which they, by introducing the false names of gods, honored only in words, the Word of God, consubstantial and essential, having become man, taught us to believe unquestionably and purely. Where now is it holy to deify again and attempt to rekindle that irrational deification, which has been extinguished, and to recognize certain gods from philosophy, beyond the distorted opinion of the poets, and to establish solemn rites and laws of morals and diet under the guidance of Zoroaster, Plato, and the Stoics, and to gather again such a fog of words? When this fog was divinely dispersed by the rays of sacred teaching, the nature of humanity looked up to the radiance of the supernatural truth. If all these things were to come into my hands, I would show them to be long-winded nonsense, and many would show it. But may it be granted to me to enter this contest and to apply not fire but the words of truth to their writings, as fire is more fitting for the writers themselves. If the higher power thinks anything else of us, our intention toward piety will suffice. That I do not slander those who have dared such things, and that others delight in them, they themselves know, and many with them. But time will reveal to all what is now hidden.

9. But you have greatly pleased us by exposing the nonsense of the Greeks, not incidentally, so that if some, ignorant of it, are deceived by others, they may learn and condemn it. And from the same starting point, as you said, you have shown in the letter sent to you by the Latins that they either accuse the Greeks in vain or are themselves held by the same errors and do not recognize it. For there is no longer room for those who slander your soul and insist that you think as they do, when you clearly show contempt for such things. Nor will anyone who knows what you have written against the Latins believe them. And I, by the sacred truth, thought I heard Plato and Aristotle themselves, complaining and crying out that they had been greatly wronged by you, having learned their dignified teachings and then danced away from them. This would have been a reproach to all of us enlightened by the truth, if they were present. Rather, they would have praised us for thus despising their teachings, having learned by experience that their lawlessness toward the divine nature did not benefit them, nor did that fortunate deification deliver them. But their admirers today, out of ignorance, would have been much harsher toward you, if it were possible, casting aside all respect for the most base things, crying out against your frankness as if you had done wrong. For your judgment is not insignificant, though the truth itself and its works are sufficient for its establishment, and the multitude of those who have been established in it with reason and virtue. If anyone, disregarding these, prefers to trust himself over them, such a one would rightly be thought to suffer the fate of the mad. But for those who dare to revive falsehood, it is fitting that they be trampled and crushed by it, for nothing escapes them on which that falsehood proudly insists. But you, as if reproving, will say that you honor Aristotle and Plato where necessary, but condemn them where they speak unlawfully. This is where they have been caught in critical matters.

10. How could it be reasonable or true in any way not to distinguish the essence of God from His energy, since the nature of the matter itself differs, and the "what it is" is different even in God Himself, if one is not to utter these names in vain, and neither their unity, as they would say, nor their distinction is of any use? Or

to say that certain children of God are brought forth from His essence, if indeed also from His energy, which is entirely the same as His nature, and then not to deem it right for God to bring forth those who are of the same nature, but to bring forth all others as entirely different substances and far inferior? For either it was necessary to say that no one is brought forth from the essence of God, which is the same as saying from His energy according to them, and that God is entirely childless and without offspring—though in this way He would be most one and indivisible, as they say, which would be far better than dividing the divinity into many —or creation would not come from God but would either be spontaneous or not exist at all. Not only would it be impossible without the co-creating and co-administering children of God (for they would need both), but also because His energy would be without offspring, being entirely the same as His essence. Therefore, they ought to legislate thus: either saying that certain children are begotten from the essence of God, and many of them, and that they are of the same essence, all consubstantial and equally powerful in all things and their parts. But in this way, either they alone would exist, and none of the creations; for God would not likely bring forth other things by His energy, lest they also be gods, brought forth by the same principle, since His energy and essence are entirely the same. Or all beings would be gods, either similarly brought forth from God by His essence, or from the children of God, as they themselves are brought forth from Him. For no human reason could be given why God should bring forth all beings from His essence, or rather His energy, and yet not all be gods, if some of them are gods precisely because they have come forth from His essence, or why the children of God, having come forth from His essence, should not bring forth gods, whatever they bring forth from their own essence. That something should come forth from the essence of God without having the essence of God equally is as absurd as saying that all things that have come forth from God in any way partake of His essence. For just as there they would be equal to God, though they ought to be entirely different and not worthy of comparison, so here they would be unlike what they ought to be, though they should differ in nothing. But if He is entirely generative and productive of many, He will establish some as different from Himself (though how things coming from His essence could be such has been questioned before), while remaining in Himself and His own unity without any procession, and He will be one, as if simply indivisible, and truly a monad, how will His works not be far better? For some of these are causes not only by energy but also by essence, and they produce not only by art but also by nature. To which it would be far better to impart the form of nature, and to lesser beings, than to bring forth many things similar to His will, not only for the permanence of the form but simply. And everyone would say that it is better to have those who produce not only according to nature but also according to art.

11. If it were possible to examine the matter differently, by dividing it hypothetically, those causes that produce by both nature and art would live less happily than those that produce by art alone. And now among humans, one lives much more pleasantly and happily by having begotten two or three children like himself by nature than by having often made as many beds or any other product of art, which, though unlike nature, is fashioned according to the internal form of choice. And if it were not for the cares of child-rearing, which stand in the way of contemplation, persuading those who greatly love contemplation to remain childless, and for the many other difficulties associated with raising children, both before and after, even the most miserable person would avoid this, thinking that producing something artistic would suffice for his happiness, and he would be irrevocably deprived of true pleasure. For we know that these things are made for the sake of humanity and are valued for their utility, not for themselves. Therefore, as much as a human is better than a

bed or a footstool, so much better is it to beget a human than to create one of those things. And as much as that for the sake of which something is brought forth is more honorable than the thing itself, or the cause of the thing brought forth for its sake, so much more honorable is it to beget a human than to build a house for a human, if one were to measure them by their true worth and not by some utility. But those who do not wish God to bring forth anything from Himself according to the likeness of nature, but only other things different from Himself, render Him entirely without offspring and lacking in the most beautiful part of production. And thus they also obscure His happiness and blessedness. For how could He be established in the highest degree of blessedness if He did not have a self-sufficient life, acting within Himself and for Himself, but needed things far inferior to Himself, whether they came into being at some time, as the sacred word teaches, or from all eternity, as they wished, so that by acting upon them and concerning them, and turning them toward Himself, He might have His essence active and His blessedness and perfection dependent on His inferior works? For if the works of God are such, they must exist by nature before Him, as the trace exists before the footprint; for they say that beings are like traces of God. But in this priority, the divine would be foolish and loveless, according to them, and indeed, in no way active. For it is not enough to foreknow beings as if they were about to exist, nor is the idea of the world before the world sufficient; for those who speak thus place it below God, since it did not arise from the necessity of His nature. Either God alone will not know Himself, being intellect, or He will know Himself by knowing other things. What could be more absurd than this? But if these things are inconsistent, and God is what He is, good and true in the highest and purest degree of essence, goodness, and truth, then even the more esteemed of the Greeks thought it right to reverse these things. And the sacred word declares that God Himself is the truth, and that no one is good except God alone, and that He is the being of beings and the supreme and most wise intellect, as not only we but also the Greeks themselves say.

12. Therefore, God would exist for Himself and not for the sake of anything else, being the first and most principal. And being intellect, He would surely know Himself, if He must know the truth, and He Himself is this truth. And He would love the good; for He would not be the only good without delighting in the good. He would love Himself, if He must delight in and enjoy the best, and He Himself is the good. The intelligible itself, by which He knows Himself, and the act of knowing, are revealed as the divine Word, His likeness and a kind of inherent idea and truth itself, not only in God and as God Himself, but also toward God, as the oracles intend. And the love itself, by which God is turned toward Himself and loves Himself as the true good, is revealed as the divine Spirit, good and holy, and goodness itself, and holiness itself, and sanctification itself by nature. And thus God subsists in Himself in threefold manner, and there are three hypostases in Him, in the highest unity of nature. For surely the divine Word, which is the abyss of all divine thoughts, must not be a non-subsistent God. Or how could it be a true idea of God, as a natural likeness and image and character and inherent radiance, and also an idea, as a supernatural paradigm of things made according to the likeness of the will of the Begetter and of Himself, being God by nature, if it were not a subsistent, intelligible God toward the same God by nature, though knowing relatively, opposed to Him? It would be worse than the divine intellect, its inherent and equal likeness, if it were not also like Him in subsisting. And the idea and word in God would be far less than the works of God, if they subsisted while it did not, though it infinitely surpasses all. But the divine Word would have something more than the word in us, as far as the nature of the word is concerned, I mean that it is contained in the intellect as a kind of form,

somewhat like the intelligible and the intellect. For the word in us is not a separate hypostasis, but exists rather in the hypostasis of the intellect, being distinguished from it as existing; for it is not simply but intelligibly. Therefore, the divine Word must be adorned with the identity of deity through the simplicity of the divine nature, and with the hypostatic property of the intellect, and as He is truly knowing, so He is truly known. The same reasoning applies to the divine Spirit, if one wishes to apply what has been said before to Him according to what has been handed down concerning Him, preserving the distinction in the persons. At the same time, it is clear to those who think both reasonably and piously that there is no need to extend the divine hypostases further. For nothing said about God cannot be rightly referred to these hypostases and their processions, whether it be goodness, wisdom, strength, or anything else of the kind. So there is no necessity for the inner and natural fertility to be more than the hypostases we know and believe, or for the divine Word to beget or project, since He knows and loves Himself and the Begetter and the consubstantial Spirit, or for the Spirit to project or beget for the sake of knowledge and love, which must also belong to Him. For each of these knows and loves as it proceeds from God, and thus proceeds, but not as God and the Father, from whom both have proceeded, and it is receiving and receiving with another, not in the same way, but not able to share with another, which would be the same as sharing in the divine with the Father necessarily. For they are distinguished only by the manner of their procession, though consubstantially, the one from the one who projected them, the other from each other. And so, only this being preserved, the communion in the others must be considered and established; and it would be preserved, with knowledge and love being without offspring, as to the intelligible and begotten God, the Word, and to the beloved and projected God, the Spirit; so that their principle is Him knowing and loving Himself, which is the same as being only knowing and loving in a generative way (for all have rightly esteemed what is truly equal there as being able to do all at once); and the one is knowledge itself and the intelligible itself, the Word of God, and the other is love itself and the beloved itself, the Holy Spirit; which is the same as knowing and loving without offspring. And as God and the Father is known and loved by both, but not projected by both, so these know and love each other and the Father, but do not project the Father, nor are they projected by each other; and the divine nature is in all, being known and loved, itself and the knowing and loving being one thing there, though in a different way, differing in truth and reality and not only in thought, as some have babbled, being one intellect and one God in nature, the three hypostases being and being believed by the sensible, the knowledge and love there differing in the generative and non-generative, establishing only the cause and the caused, to which the three hypostases necessarily follow by their true references and properties.

13. The Word of God Himself is more trustworthy than us and our word, testifying to Himself and the divine Spirit, as proceeding from God, subsisting, and being in Him by nature no less, and in each other. And the sacred theology of the Jews, prefiguring and proclaiming in advance the truth about the divine that was to shine forth later, clearly distinguishes the construction and constitution of beings by the Word of the Lord, and metaphorically their preservation and continuance in being by the Spirit of His mouth; and it ascribes being to the one and well-being to the other, as far as their personal property is concerned (for as God is one, all His works are all that comprises the being and well-being of beings); and it makes the Word the producer of the truth of beings, insofar as He is their likeness to the idea of the divine will, and the Spirit their turning to the good, so that each may love and extend itself according to its nature. Both are of the divine and greatest power, so that without God nothing can exist, or be true, or be turned to God.

14. But some of those who honor the Greeks, having said that the good, intellect, and soul are the primary hypostases, and that they are three constitutive causes of beings, and a triple order of gods, what else do they do but agree with the Trinity we proclaim, differing only in manner from the truth in Christ, as was likely? For the accuracy of the heavenly doctrine had to be revealed by the truth itself; but the testimonies to it, due to human weakness and contentiousness, had to be presented partly by the less perfect and introductory, as we might say, theology, and partly by the entirely foreign and spurious deification, if one were willing to pay close attention, having also received this as a gift from God. I omit how many, exalting the Trinity, the children of the Greeks call good counsel, prudence, piety, harmony, concord, virtue, perfection, and all the most venerable names, as extending wonderfully in numbers and magnitudes and the nature of the whole universe with great strength and beauty, not thus dividing all, unless being consubstantial with the cause of all, as is fitting for the highest of intellects and intelligibles, adorning its works with a certain proportional likeness from there, so that as they partake of being from God, so also of harmony and perfection and all beauty through the image of the supernatural Trinity in them, they may have the best and most like to the Maker, as far as possible.

15. Such is the theology according to Christ. But in the theology of the Greeks, you will say, there is nothing sound or venerable. For with their multitude of deities and gods, they achieved nothing necessary, seemingly exalting the one God but in practice raising up so many partners and sharers with Him in all power and authority, and by degrading the most venerable name to so many levels, they wronged all who come after the first and insulted nature itself, which they honor with this name. For how can gods who have limited power, each ranked by nature down to the last, whom some final divinity adorned, and each entrusted with a different task for the constitution of the universe according to the proportion of their nature, so that not only the greater but also the lesser gods serve them—how can these be gods? And if God did not bring forth all things by one power extending variously over all, but by many powers distributed to each thing, would we not be led to call these powers gods, and not only to call them so but also to worship them, as natures subsisting apart from God, doing His work and governing this universe? How could these gods, capable of different and greater or lesser things, be brought forth by one power extending variously over all? Similarly, we would be led to seek other gods, more ancient and prior to those known to the Greeks, and before them still others by the same reasoning, and this ad infinitum, since the infinite superiority of God's nature over His works allows us always to take others before those already taken, because, they say, God must never directly reach the creation of inferior things except through some better nature, and thus they are compelled to have an infinite number of gods, whom they wrong by limiting them to a certain number. And yet it would be more reasonable to posit these as infinite, having once divided the divine nature into many, as infinity would belong to it everywhere, unless they say that multitude indicates some weakness. But in this way, they would also be at war with themselves, as we have said before. For they should not posit many gods, attributing weakness to the divine nature. Thus, they err on both sides, either by limiting to a number those who should be infinite in multitude, or by declaring them weak, as if the inferior gods were struck by some infinite difference of divine power and dignity. For what would be the dignity of Apollo, let alone Hermes and those below him, with so many higher gods above them, through whom divinity has descended to them by some degree? And to deify the bodies moved by the gods for their own sake—how is this not impious? For these things, on account of their size, strength, beauty, and endurance, should indeed be greatly admired.

But the wonder at them should immediately be directed to the Creator, just as sensible spectators of the most beautiful building admire the work but are struck with awe and reverence for the art and the artisan. Therefore, just as no sensible person would call a house a human, even if it is the work of a human skillfully made, so too one should not call the sun and moon gods and worship them, recognizing that they are works of God, beautiful in themselves and a adornment to the universe, and beneficial to all inferior beings. Such reverence should be extended to all things that have something worthy of wonder and are from God. For there is no work of God, even the smallest, that one should not exceedingly marvel at. And the wonder is much greater in the smallest things, where God has implanted a certain wisdom and unusual methods to display His power, instead of the deficiencies that come from size.

16. Therefore, the curiosity of the wiser has misled the many, who, marveling at the greater things in the world, have been led to deify and worship them. Though they acted more reasonably than the many, it is still more reasonable for the many, since, while it was fitting for their leaders to direct divine reverence to the works of God, they did not begrudge such honor to any of the works, since in all of them some exceptional wisdom of God is manifest, and even those that seem diminished in quantity can lead to greater wonder, and there is none of them that does not have some causal and beneficial aspect. But what of Demeter, who is trampled, and Hephaestus, who is extinguished, and Poseidon, bitter and destructive? What of the male and female among the gods? What of some presiding over good things and others over the worse, both in nature and in human affairs? And they deify some humans, while casting others among the stars, and they fabricate nothing that is not absurd, as if deliberately seeking to drive out the perfection, simplicity, self-sufficiency, infinity, impassibility, omnipotence, and providence of God. Through these, they drag divinity into such shameful passions, greatly at odds with the best and most venerable name and reality. And yet it is quite reasonable to posit some separate substances, but not creators of beings in any way, nor sharing the origin of the universe with God, since the power of the first cause, extending infinitely, is sufficient to produce the natures of all things. And we believe that those separate substances serve God's providence over us, but not as the Greeks fabricated. And we know and reject certain harmful demons, motivated by envy and delighting in evil, as agents of error and countless evils for humans, especially those who, through negligence, are easily ensnared by their plots. These demons were not originally such or created by God as such, but turned to such things through audacity, arrogance, and worse choices, and were abandoned by God. We are preserved unharmed by them through the oversight of God's good servants. But how could we say that they partake of divinity, when we do not even grant this to the good? And it is necessary that some humans become blessed, but blessed humans. And it is true that different things are governed by different beings, as far as the fulfillment of God's providence and governance is concerned. For it was fitting that each of these governed things should have some good and be beneficial in some way. Thus, the authority of the sole Governor of all things would shine more brightly, with many serving Him and all in good order, or one wonderfully dependent on another, as in the order of nature, so also in service. But as far as the principle of governance is concerned, we believe that all things are governed directly by God through His divine wisdom and power. For they fit into the logic of infinity, extending even to the least. For it would not have been possible for Him to create the world and not govern it Himself, nor to impose the principle of order on the things He created and now imposes, unless through lack of power or reason. But nothing of the sort befits God, who would not disdain reason, being capable and knowing, nor consider Himself diminished by the providence of these

particular and lowly things. For if He will not be worse by acting in them, and He surely acts in all things, since the ability to act flows suitably from Him to all, He will scarcely harm His dignity by caring for their good order, which would no less demonstrate His surpassing power.

17. These things, then, you might say to them, O best of men, and others much better than these but similar in purpose, showing how great is the difference between Greek superstition and our theology. And in addition, that the Church need not be accused of ignorance for not adopting the Greek dignity. For without being persuaded by a greater dignity, it should disdain this and all else, having often discovered much in its struggles against heretics, by which it is not necessary, on account of this proposition, to posit the Son of God as of a different essence from the Father, or the Holy Spirit. For all the followers of Arius, clearly infected by the Greeks, used this proposition as a starting point for falsehood against the divine hypostases. But the Church found and clearly demonstrated to all, and delivered such a judgment. And God from above bore witness to the judgment, manifesting many signs that those who stubbornly insisted on the Greek dignity instead of the Church's and did not abandon it after the Church's confession in the better and more precise terms were hateful to God. For being different on account of something does not necessarily mean being different in nature. For otherwise, everything that exists from something would differ in nature from that from which it exists. But there is something that exists on account of another, being the same in nature as that on account of which it exists. For Peter exists on account of Zebedee, but does not differ in nature. If Zebedee exists on account of another, it makes no difference to the argument. For it is not because Zebedee exists on account of another that Peter exists from him. For Zebedee and Peter would both exist from the same father. But if Zebedee is posited as existing from no other, and produces Peter as now by his nature, he would produce him by the same nature. The hypothesis is not impossible. For sacred teaching posits a first human. And if he exists on account of God, this need not be considered here, for the cause is not of the same kind. But in the case of God, it is entirely true, since He exists on account of nothing else but entirely on account of Himself. If, then, nothing prevents an individual produced from another from producing another according to the form of its nature, what prevents us from believing that God produced an individual from Himself according to the form of His nature? For if nothing would have prevented Zebedee, if it were possible for him to be the first human, from producing Peter, since he was produced from nothing, as long as he was such and capable of such, how would being from nothing prevent God from producing something from Himself, as long as He is omnipotent and by nature and will most perfect and best? This, then, would also be part of God's omnipotence, that He can beget a Son equal to Himself. And it would be a weakness not to be able to do so.

18. Thus, it is not necessary that everything which exists on account of something else be distinct in nature from that on account of which it exists, any more than it is necessary that nothing at all exist from nothing or in any way. Nor is it necessary that the Son of God be different in nature from the One who begot Him, as the followers of Arius wished, or that if He were not such, He would not exist at all from God, as the Greek and their reasoning seemed to demand. In general, if what exists from nothing, being unbegotten and uncaused, must alone exist, and since it does not exist from anything in any way, nothing else would proceed from it in any way, neither those falsely named gods and children of God, nor anything else of the beings. But if this is not necessary—for many things have been brought forth and come into being in some way by the Unbegotten—what necessity is there that the Unbegotten should not also generate in a

synonymous manner? For surely it will not be able to produce unlike things but unable to produce like things, which has already been refuted, as if some of the generative beings were able to produce illegitimate offspring but not legitimate ones. Nor will it be the case that according to will it is the source of some things, but according to nature it is the source of nothing. For it is not the same in both respects for those whose essence is not the same. Nor will it be generative in one respect and non-generative in another. Nor, if it has the same nature as its energy entirely, will it be the cause of some things according to nature, the same things which it produces by energy, and nothing will be lacking in it to be a producer by nature. But if it is shown that nature and essence are in some way truly distinct in it, it will produce by energy and not by nature. Nor will it make other things by knowing, but will not know itself as able to make other things, lest the concept conceived in it and the Word or image of God inherent in it be implied. Nor will other things be from God because He exists from nothing, but His Word will not be from Him for this reason, nor the Holy Spirit. As long as there is no necessity that God be non-generative because He is unbegotten, or that nothing exist from Him because He exists from Himself, the proposition of the Greeks and the Arians will have no force. But the thing that exists from itself and the thing that exists from another will in some way not be the same. They will differ not entirely by the same difference, but in number if something exists from Him by His nature, and in form and essence if by His will. And the difference of powers will not be the greatest similarly in all, but if the Unbegotten, being by nature and will the best and most perfect, creates something willing, as things made by art, it will differ most in power from the things produced by Him by nature. Rather, they will differ from Him. But if some things proceed from Him by natural procession, they will be separated from the Unbegotten only by being from the Unbegotten and by numerical difference, their nature being entirely the same, and thus more the same than in Zebedee and Peter, insofar as in them the form of nature differs in number in both. But here, because of immateriality and infinity, the nature is one in number, that is, the divinity, in the thing that exists from itself and in those brought forth from Him in this way. And if we must be more precise, God simply exists from Himself and from nothing else. But creation, being the greatest difference of powers, as they say, exists and has come to be on account of something else, namely, on account of God. But the divine Word does not exist on account of something else, nor does the Spirit, nor do they differ from God who brought them forth by existing from something else and from themselves. For how could things that have the same nature in number differ? But by existing more from itself and from another, as the difference pertains to the hypostases themselves, not to the nature, it would seem. In things where natural unity is so clearly manifest, existing from itself and from Him introduces no difference of powers. It makes a difference, indeed a great one, because by this alone they differ, preserving the distinction unmixed, and just as they would not partake of the property of the thing existing from itself, so too it would never pass over to the state of the caused. But an individual and personal difference or that of nature could not harm the unity of nature, nor make the things from the Father and in Him worse or weaker in any respect pertaining to essence. For if they differ by nature because they cannot pass into each other's properties, they will be no less in nature than the Father, because each is not also the Father, although they are what the Father is. Nor will the Father suffer this because He cannot be them, although He is what they are. But neither will they have any less power in them because of such immutability, nor will they be better or worse in essence. For such a thing would be more a matter of power than weakness. And in this way they would be more like the One who brought them forth in nature and power than if it were possible for them to

pass into His property, while He remains immutable toward theirs. For surely He would not be led to the worse, nor they to the better, if being brought forth from God consubstantially is no less to His glory, and if it is necessary in divinity that there be something that brings forth and things that proceed, and that the one God has in Himself and toward Himself such a distinction as we have already described.

19. These things, then, you might say at some point to those who will raise questions, and you will say more than these. But now the theology of the Greeks, being such, is rightly refuted by you. For this, especially in the struggle against the Latins, I now know I owe you thanks and always will. And the Latins themselves would rightly owe you thanks, being able to benefit from those fine arguments, and they would disdain that dignity by which one might risk bringing back some Arian and Greek theology from a long journey, having simply posited it. But if they neither benefit nor complain, let them enjoy what follows from the proposition, as you said you are striving to establish the full strength of the doctrine now. For having previously struggled to support it with many other arguments, much weaker than the one sought, since, as it seems, they found those clearly refuted, they thought they had now discovered something clever, by which they hoped to lead us astray with their sophistry. How will they not be convinced by all these things, positing this as necessary? For it is no more necessary for them to call the Son the projector of the Spirit because He must share with the Father the power to project, than to say that the Father is not a projector or begetter, nor that there is any Son of God or Holy Spirit, because if they existed, they would be lesser in nature, neither generative of others nor projective. Or as long as they posit that dignity and believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, they confess the Son and the Spirit to be of a lesser divinity, as diminished in power compared to the Father, since He is unbegotten, and they are brought forth by Him and produce nothing else. And we previously said that they trouble only the Spirit, depriving Him of some projective power, which they legislate as belonging only to the Father and the Son. But they have been shown to you to begin their mischief even from the divine Word, if not themselves, then their reasoning doing this. And their reasoning is even more astonishing, because realizing that they are being carried to such conclusions, they try to escape the danger by another worse device, leading more quickly to the same danger. For by positing the paternal powers, as they say, as common to both of those proceeding from Him, they allow one to remain in the Son without activity, and in the Spirit they deem neither to be active. Knowing that positing these as active would greatly distance those who posit them from Christianity, they would have done so even if there were hope of doing it unnoticed, not because they themselves believe so, but making it their utmost concern to draw us into their union. But nothing could be more glaringly absurd. But by giving and then taking away powers, or giving them on greater conditions, they make the Son of God the projector of the Spirit by a power given to Him to act, which is neither reasonable nor close to the sacred, expecting us to be ignorant, and thus they command us to follow them. As if it were possible for something to exist in God arbitrarily, which they would not grant to nature and its works, or for some power to be the perfection of anything, if it were not always accompanied by its proper activity, or for God to have some power of activity apart from what accompanies His nature, not by His will, or whatever other evils follow from the principle of their doctrine. You have sufficiently refuted these things and demonstrated our ancestral faith by reason, in which I greatly rejoice among the things that can be said against the Latins. For it is not possible for them to be free of all the evils to which their position leads. But they must be involved in some of them on the path of such reasoning, which would pertain to the foundation of the doctrine they would choose from all.

20. That there must be some order in the blessed Trinity, by which the Son is also numbered before the Spirit, you concede; for it is very necessary. But what kind of order the Latins posit, you reject. For many disgraceful things follow from theirs. But as we say the divine persons are ordered, as also ordered by the oracles, nothing discordant happens. For our position agrees no less with the tradition of saving baptism, just as all other things are correct, than theirs seems to agree with it, being otherwise erroneous. And that the Son, sending the Holy Spirit and having some dignity because of this, would not seem plausibly ordered before Him to those who examine such things closely, even if your wisdom somehow overlooked this, the argument will provide no small handle to opponents. For if the sending and procession are the same, as they think, they will have their point. Or if they differ, as we think, we will seem absurd to them, positing an eternal order of divine person to divine person by an eternal power common to the Trinity or by the temporal work of this power. From that, then, we in no way take the necessity of order, but we and all before us take it in other ways, in which nothing discordant happens to the principles of faith or the teachers of the Church, as happens with the Latin complication of the divine.

21. But concerning this, enough has been said; for our present discourse is not against the Latins. It is important to address how they fall short of the truth. But to show that the Fathers, whether ours or the Latins themselves, are in harmony with each other regarding the homonymy of the Spirit and the twofold procession of what is said about Him, and the procession and sending, nothing could be truer, since even the Latins themselves agree on this. Therefore, it is worthy of wonder that, neglecting the most truthful methods of the harmony of the teachers, they turn to other unheard-of methods, inventing certain transpositions of personal properties and communions of the uncommunicable, and adding such things as are far from common positions. It would have been much easier for them, turning to what they themselves have confessed, to distinguish the Fathers without offense by the double understanding of those homonymous terms and to resolve the dispute. And they would not have so painfully attributed the cause of innovation to Augustine and Cyril, the blessed.

22. They often say that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. But one, having taken "proceed" to mean "subsist," along with all the Fathers from Asia (for concerning the Spirit, they are never found using this term otherwise), says countless times that the Spirit proceeds from the Father, but never from the Son. But using "proceed" sometimes for the sending to creation, and sometimes instead of "subsist," he nowhere appears to say that the Spirit proceeds from the Son, unless some created limit is added, which the Fathers say we must take as a sign that they are speaking about the sending, being interpreters of their own words, so that it may not be permitted for some sophists to take refuge in them. And yet the Latins use homonymy elsewhere in the Scriptures and do not overlook it; for otherwise they could not understand them soundly. But when we use it here, they accuse us, as if we make the Scriptures and the teachers sophistical. As if they do not know that to remove such things from the discourse was very difficult even for the first teachers. But they conclude for us from these middles, which happen to agree with them and with those who first spoke, but false and such as those who leap from this meaning to that, as is likely, we are and seem to be truly sophists. But the leaders of the expressions, with whom we try to agree, are not necessarily partakers of the charge. For they distinguished well, according to the needs of the discourse each time, applying the same names not in the same way.

23. And Cyril is thus. But Augustine does not have two terms to indicate the twofold procession due to the narrowness of language, but whether he wishes to signify the subsistence of the Spirit or its energy and grace elsewhere, he himself used one verb, "proceed" or "go forth," for both notions, leaving it to those who listen with good will to distinguish according to the need of the discourse. For he himself does not say such things far from those double meanings, some of which draw the term "procession" to the subsistence of the Spirit, others to the sending. And it is no wonder, since Cyril somewhere said that the Son proceeds from the Father, having taken the term to mean "beget." Hence, even if one interprets Augustine's term "proceed" under compulsion by the Latins, it is not necessary that the Spirit subsist also from the Son because of Augustine's term. For it is much more fitting to transfer the term to the remaining procession, which suits both the Spirit (for eternally He is breathed from the Father in subsistence, receiving His being from the Father, and from the Father and the Son He is breathed to the faithful, that is, given and participated in according to the spiritual energies) than to draw it to generation, in which the Spirit has no part. This Cyril boldly dared, more piously understanding the term, when he alone reasonably connected the homonymy of "proceed" with the homonymy of the Spirit in the discourses about the Spirit, if the words of the Western Fathers were thus forcibly interpreted, using Cyril's rule, which he once innovated, applying "proceed" to two hypostases and processions differing in kind. And yet, concerning all others, if "proceed" is homonymous, nothing prevents "proceed" from being such, but in sacred theology we find all indicating only the subsistence of the Spirit by "proceed," and using "proceed" for both this and the sending, whose pattern it is right for us to follow.

24. But to call the Son a co-cause and the Father a source-like cause, though you did well not to praise it, for without distinguishing the co-cause, they call both hypostases one source, so that it remains for them to contradict themselves, if it were possible for one source to be what is not one in being, but rather two, bringing forth, if it brings forth, where did they find the term "co-cause" applied to the divine? But rather they innovate this too. Where has any of the blessed been found saying "source-like"? But some rather say that the Spirit proceeds from the Father in a source-like manner, as if to declare that it does not proceed from the Son in a source-like manner, but rather in a sending and imparting manner, as it might be said to proceed from Himself, and being His own gift, and by the addition of this adverb they distinguish the indeterminate term "proceed" and the procession. For they knew the difference was not small, whether the divine persons proceed from the source of His hypostasis, that is, from their generative and unbegotten cause, or are moved for the benefit of creation according to energy, that is, from the like will of the three persons. Or the Son would have to be begotten sent by the Spirit. But the Scripture and all the Fathers agree that He proceeds thus from Him. And reasonably. For not only the Father sent the Son of God into the flesh and His manifestation in it, but also the Spirit, consenting with them to that economy, as the work of the whole Trinity accomplished in the person of the Son. But the Holy Spirit has the Father alone as His source clearly, but toward creation He is always sent also from the divine Word, as it is not possible for it to be well and rightly governed unless by the divine Spirit. And sometimes more obscurely, other times more fully and clearly, not so much the Son sending Him as also being sent by Him, since the grace of the Spirit is common and imparted by the three persons. And when it is given and received by the saints, and through it humans are brought into communion with God, as far as possible, the Spirit is said to be sent. But to call the Father a source-like cause of the Spirit and the Son a co-cause, though it agrees with them, it is for the worse. For all

co-causes have the rank of instrumental causes toward those that act in a source-like manner, and only those who know well about such things rightly call them co-causes. Therefore, knowing that it does not disagree with the Arian opinion to call the Son a co-cause with the Father of the creatures, the theologians refrained from calling Him thus, unless someone used it under the necessity of discourse, but rather call both and the whole Trinity one cause and one source, as both and all are one God, since creation came from them. For it is not possible for something to belong to the Father and the Son that does not also belong to the Spirit, nor, if something does not apply to the Spirit for whatever reason, can it apply to the Father and pass communicably to the Son.

25. You have spoken all these things wisely and truly, so that by not repeating each point, I may not seem to do something superfluous. But for which I owe you the greatest thanks for your wisdom, I will say, and for this reason I have written these things to you as they came to mind. In this city, two arguments disturb and shake the simpler ones, led by those who promote union with the Latins. I call thus also all who are hidden; for these are the worse of the most manifest. And first, they say there is nothing terrible in our uniting with the Latins in doctrine. For even if what they say is unusual, it can be true, with nothing absurd following, and the Latins, convinced that nothing such follows, rejoice as in a true doctrine. And if you wish, they say, rising up, they will publicly denounce those who once held those absurd doctrines, and concerning themselves, if they hold them secretly, they will bear such a judgment. And as they allow none of the evils suspected from this doctrine, they will deny it in words, writings, and all ways. And they think the Latins will give us enough by giving this; and they themselves hope to unite with them wisely, thus uniting. And to many, as I said, of the ignorant, most of those who demand this seem to say something, being no wiser than they. But we, with many others who know such things (for the city still nourishes some educated), having often refuted their error, and still the malice of some, have seemed burdensome; and we seem still to hinder union with the Latins for the sake of empty contention. And yet what could be clearer and more just than that they should rather retract their original hypothesis, as you said, and concerning those absurdities, neither they need fear trouble by denying them, nor we need accuse them as holding to them. As long as they preserve the principle of those absurdities in their thoughts and words, even if they deny them countless times, they will seem to say something. And yet to remove that term from the common confession, which has so troubled the Churches, or to give it its true and well-known meaning, leaving the difference only in the term, about which no one of sense would henceforth dispute (concerning other differences another discourse would be needed), would be easiest for those willing, and at the same time dignity would be added to the matter. But for those who wish to deny so many absurdities that follow from this, to seem to defend themselves as accused of the most shameful things, and to risk being caught holding to others (for every falsehood has more absurdities following; and the truth is determined everywhere, but falsehood puts forth many more heads than those told of the hydra; and it is likely that for this reason something else terrible is joined to this position besides those examined up to the present), it has much difficulty for both.

26. Moreover, it is not permissible for us to deviate from the pattern of the Church in matters of doctrine, which has been upheld by its leaders for so many years, even if it were possible for someone to be deceived by ignorance and accept the principle of the most manifest falsehood, proclaiming that they are waging war against the falsehood joined with us. For the Fathers in the ecumenical councils (and let no one be troubled by the term and the example) rejected such things as the heretics in each case babbled. For few of

the heresies openly waged war against the faith and fought against its articles, but most armed themselves with some roundabout way against the truth, and it was necessary to be especially cautious of these, as the simpler ones would be more harmed by them. Thus, the followers of Eutyches denied all the absurdities that followed from their position. For they did not confess to attributing suffering to the divinity of our Lord Christ, nor that He became man in appearance, nor any such thing, but they insisted only that the two natures had come together into one in Christ, and they brought forward some plausible arguments for this opinion. But they cried out that all those absurdities and those who once held them were the most impious. Similarly, the followers of Pyrrhus denied the one nature and one energy in Christ, but by positing one will, they thought they were saying nothing terrible, since the human will was purely subjected to the divine in our Lord. And they seemed acceptable to many, saying and crying out that they did not concede any of the absurdities attributed to them. But those wise Fathers commanded them rather to reject the position itself, and to deny the one nature, those more dangerous enemies of the economy, and to posit two wills in Christ, the leader of human salvation, instead of one, if they were not to be driven far from the sacred, as indeed they were driven by the judgment of the Church, not being convinced.

27. Therefore, we must follow those Fathers and not seek to abolish innovation with a worse innovation, but rather to confirm the innovation of others under the guise of abolition, and to join them in innovating, who have so long reasonably resisted innovation for the sake of the ancestral faith. Unless someone says that the Church often errs, having so judged. What word could ever fall more harshly on pious ears? Thus, even the Latins do not accept our exposition (that is, that the Holy Spirit does not proceed from the Son, whether in subsistence or otherwise), even though we deny the Arian and Nestorian heresies in every confession and in every way, as they accuse us. But since it is most secure, being well-known and feared because of the threats of the Third Council, and revered because of the four after it, which confirmed the laws of the Third Council, we did not include it in the symbol. And it would be much more just for them to agree with us in the denial because of our denials, than for them to force their affirmation on us, which is not entirely in harmony with the common principles and what was not lawful to add. And if we simply held the Latin opinion, we would err worse than they. For they, thinking that nothing evil follows from it, would not willingly be as the position makes them. But we, as we firmly believe that one evil is joined to many in it, must willingly be corrected by all, if we neglect it as if it makes no difference. Hence, it is not more blameworthy for us to teach the Latins, if they can be persuaded; but if they are not able to understand, following many wiser than us and more persuasive than the Latins, with forgiveness for what is hard to follow, and with cautious security, we are to be praised, until they wish to heal this ecclesiastical wound by the only just way, as they themselves are the ones who struck it. They try to dissolve the bond of those absurdities with the original hypothesis. But they are so far from dissolving it that they seem more burdensome to the knowledgeable, positing much more disgraceful things than at first, only to seem to say something, and to seem to dissolve without dissolving. But we, with our Fathers, show the sequence of those absurdities from the hypotheses of the faith, so that it seems to follow the laws of discourse. Therefore, we reject the original hypothesis no less than its consequences, thinking it equally possible to rejoice in it and be repelled by it, both for the sake of truth and its opposite.

28. Having said these things often and composed many books, not out of love for writing many books, but out of zeal for benefit and desire for their benefit, as we thought, we have not persuaded the men to be

sensible. But perhaps now your judgment will compel them, if we did not seek it in vain. But that piety in this matter will never be saved by impiety, that by what we do, we drive God from our own rule, neglecting all these things by which other cities are saved, and practicing none of the things in which God is accustomed to rejoice in human pursuits, but only with sacrifices, incense, and the exaltation of voices, and some light shadows of piety instead of works, and with hypocrisies of good things, thinking to serve God. Then also by the betrayal of some glory, which we have received concerning the divine and from the divine itself, buying salvation from the enemies from those who can neither give it nor perhaps wish to, but only with writings instead of works and empty hopes delighting our faint-heartedness. But if they were able to help and provide, much more able to turn to the opposite, I mean our destruction, which may it not be, from the neglect of the divine. Of which no greater proof could be found than that we are ready to provoke not only others, but also the denial of the doctrines that have come to us from there. This, if someone called it the voice of God, would not miss the truth. For such are truly the voices of God, contained in the sacred books of the prophets and often brought to fulfillment, as was foretold. And what is likely testifies with them, and human justice, being a type of the divine, and the opinions common to those who have sense concerning the divine.

29. But we are disliked by the many for these things, saying these things of yours to them and, in addition, that if, having condemned their faith, they are thus cold concerning their own affairs (so as) to concede to some what they have not yet undertaken, not for the sake of the hoped-for alliance from them, but even if nothing such were promised from there, let them deliberate and act for the sake of truth itself, than which nothing is more precious to the human mind. Let it be permitted to them to change openly to whatever better faith they have recognized, and to worship thus, as that faith wishes. For other opinions about God and the divine suit other modes of worship. But it is necessary to be pious in both, and to bring forth external worship suitable to the internal conceptions about God. And let them follow all the other laws of the Church which they consider the true teacher of the procession of the Spirit. For what need have they of pretense and irony? But if, praising the ancestral piety and thinking it more secure than all others, they exchange it for some worldly gain, then they think they are being pious, how is it not folly and laughter, or rather the greatest misfortune for those who suffer it? And if one person suffered this terrible thing, it would be unbearable for his relatives and those who care for the sufferer. But that many are thus clearly corrupted, pouring out the poison of unbelief, and demanding this as the only salvation for affairs, and seeming to say something thus burdensome and strange, what slavery, how many deaths would those not yet corrupted not consider worse? To whom among men does such a thing not seem destruction? And laws are laid down everywhere for those pretending to worse things, when they are caught committing such impiety. But the law of Christ has ordained the salvation of believers in the confession of the truth with the tongue and in all external demonstrations, so that no one will be saved without such a method, even if the internal things are sound countless times. But the fine descendants of our ancestors demand that faith be pledged to those who are about to provide some good, by which the city would be unconquered by the enemies. And they demand that those who think all things concerning piety be the most impious of all men and become so, whom all consider the most pious after themselves, giving the first places to the second. And who among the Indians, Ethiopians, Armenians, Libyans, Persians, Jews, even the Latins themselves, the most pious of all nations after us, giving such a problem in the council, whether it is necessary to change the faith to become richer, or to gain a rule that is not, or to repel a pressing siege, would not immediately see stones and fire brought

against him, and everything capable of killing, so that even those who did not partake of the slaughter seem accursed, even if they are relatives, and their descendants for many generations seem nothing more venerable to those who know the wickedness of the root? Or why do we praise those captured by the enemies but keeping the faith? Even if someone is killed under compulsion, we consider him a martyr of the truth. For it would be more praiseworthy to pretend to be theirs, or even to deny the faith altogether, because they thus buy not only freedom, but also most of them are raised to the highest offices. But to overlook good fortune when it is near, how would it not be clear folly, if it were possible to benefit thus greatly in life by pretending impiety, and at the same time to be godly as before? But it is not so, it is not so, nor does it seem so to the common opinion of men. And let no one think that I place any of those who reverence Christ on a level with these unbelievers; may I not be so mad. But rebuking those wicked counselors, I say these things. For they are truly wicked, introducing a wicked doctrine into life, which would surely suit only those considering how to change to us, whom alone we hold to the unbroken rock, and whom God has set as rules for other men.

30. If, in other matters, we ourselves have experienced the effects of misfortune late, this would be a subject for another discussion. For it was not possible for our affairs to be otherwise, having been afflicted for many years past, since there was no true council among us, but rather everything was managed by a shadow of deliberation. Autonomy, self-conceit, neglect of our own affairs, and attempts at things beyond our strength—such passions had long ago taken root in the souls of our leaders. To those who were able to speak and act for the best, no freedom of speech was granted, while flatterers, the deluded, and the greedy were entrusted with everything and followed their own impulses. Virtue was envied in those who practiced it, while wickedness enjoyed the rewards that belonged to the good. Oaths were trampled upon—and what is worse, not out of necessity, but by deliberate choice. Sacred things were sold, and those who possessed them demanded abundant gold for the protection of human souls, rather than calling upon those who could truly benefit them. Laws and justice were honored in name only, while providence and divine justice were considered mere words. Those who had succumbed to the impiety of Hellenism were allowed to live and be honored, corrupting those around them, when they ought to have been directed to the most severe punishments—especially since it is far worse that they dare to speak about sacred doctrines, as if they were profane, with impunity. For I would not believe anyone who claims, even if they were to swear by heaven, that it is possible for such people to experience a better fortune. Nor did those who handed down the faith to us ever suggest that we would be saved or experience divine favor by holding only to the faith while neglecting everything else. On the contrary, they taught and advised that, in addition to sound faith, virtuous character and piety are necessary for those who wish to prosper here and live blessedly hereafter. In this present life, even before the truth of the doctrines, other forms of piety and righteousness are a great aid to happiness for those who choose them, since the fruits of the greater virtue are reserved for the future life. But if our faith is not sufficient for either form of happiness without the other virtues, what should we expect if we deny some of the things that pertain to it and stumble before God, our Fathers, and all our teachers? It is as if, trusting in one proof among many that we would not be dashed against the rocks, we then cut the very rope with our own hands.

31. But there is great hope in the most excellent king, not only because of his piety but also because through him, our affairs will greatly improve in all good things, now that we have at last begun to enjoy wise

leadership. May God grant that we see the fulfillment of this hope in deed. If anyone, while we stand in the truth, thinks that those who deviate from it even slightly will be deemed worthy of the same future life as us on account of faith alone, and therefore believes there is no harm in compromising with those who intend to lead others astray, such a person will undoubtedly include all heretics and unbelievers in the heavenly inheritance, unable by his reasoning to exclude anyone on the basis of minor differences. For all opinions about God that deviate even slightly from the truth, whether more or less serious, have strayed from the truth to some degree. Therefore, if those who have fallen into the first deviation from the truth are admitted into life, as they themselves say, then by the same reasoning, those who have deviated to a greater degree must also be admitted. And this reasoning, carried to its conclusion, would make even the most grievously deceived partakers of that life. But if this is utterly impossible, as every law declares concerning those who deviate even slightly from the right faith, let those who consider the first fall from the truth to be minor carefully consider where their hopes lie, especially when such a fall occurs willingly for the sake of some worldly good or to escape some temporary danger. If they think that by proposing the good of union and the rewards that come from it, they are saying something meaningful, let them understand that it is beneficial to unite with those who are divided, but such are those who break away from the common mind and consider their own opinion authoritative apart from others. To bring back those who are divided is more fitting for us, not by conceding to their innovations and despising the ancient ways, as the first proponents of this idea did, but by persuading them to return to soundness of mind, renouncing their peculiarities and opposition, which dissolve the bond of unity. We know well that the hoped-for assistance promised by those who speak thus is no different from the illusions and empty shadows of idols. This is the most grievous thing, and it escapes the notice of many, that by obeying or following the advice of these people, we will incur shame and loss in critical moments, miss all the expected benefits thereafter, and provoke our enemies, who will suspect the union. It would have been fitting to seek union with the Latins and all men in the most just ways, even if we were masters of the whole earth, but not to betray reverence for God and the Fathers, whether for the sake of the Latins or their kin. For if one is to preserve this reverence, one must be hostile to all men and to the fleshly desires within oneself.

32. But some, failing to see any of this, do not say what they ought, but do what is capable of troubling moderate souls. As for those who say that there is no difference between what the Latins now say and what our Fathers and teachers originally believed, we agree with them, for concerning the matters we dispute with the Latins, it is as if someone were to say that there is no difference between affirming and denying something. Such people need not be taken seriously. But those who are worse than these, speaking little of the sacred and universal teaching, but rather from some spurious and mostly intolerable discourse to construct their doctrine, make us wonder if even the Church of the Romans, relying on those principles, could resolve the problem. For we would dispute with them much more about the principles themselves, since the danger for them is greater; for they are no better than the worst. Others have devised certain ways to peace, denying what no one accuses them of and conceding what no one demands, and confirming the doctrine under the guise of resolution, scarcely able to deceive a few ethnically-minded individuals, money-lenders, and usurers, or some who were already captivated beforehand (though there is little concern for these). Others attempt to lead the simpler folk astray by various other machinations. These, as I have already said, are the worst of those who openly oppose us.

33. To all these, O most excellent one, you have opposed your wisdom, as you have always done before, but now, if ever, at the right time and with much remaining strength, you have refuted them with words of unbreakable power, not so much from the skill inherent in you as from the whole matter of the arguments themselves. For since you contend mightily for the truth, it was fitting that some divine inspiration should breathe upon you from above. Many others, therefore, will give you the greatest thanks, both through me and through themselves, and I above all will honor you and your works much more than before, not only for what was said at the beginning, but also because that book concerning the Latins was not shown to us by those who sent it to you, thinking to snatch your judgment on it before it could be seen by us. But whether it was shown to us before or after, no one would have had any reason to speak to us about it or against it, not out of disdain for it or its authors—for those who are defeated by the doctrine, not by us, ought not to judge, but God alone—but because, as it was written in defense of the Latins and with some eloquence, it was not entirely without merit. However, it differed greatly from the faith handed down to us by the Fathers, which we believe to be true. For it is fitting that those who agree with the Latins in some points of doctrine should do so for no other reason. But since we have often contended about such matters both in writing and with much more forceful arguments, we would leave this contest to others. But you, having taken it up, did not disdain to write a response, doing so very well—not so much to oppose it as to gratify those who sent it, and to turn back those who, out of ignorance, might risk abandoning the traditions of their fathers for foreign ones, and to show those who do not yet fully understand how you yourself are not committed to the innovations of yesterday and the day before, but are ready to support those who stand against them whenever necessary. Therefore, you did not condescend to refute every point in the letter, but rather sought to undermine its entire foundation, so that the superstructure of its arguments would collapse when shaken. At the same time, you wove into your arguments a defense of the truth, and to those who think that denying absurdities while remaining in their position is persuasive, or that pursuing things not according to God will benefit their cause, you have given some understanding about both these matters, if they are willing to receive it, whoever they may be.

34. You, therefore, would know the greatest gratitude to our Lord Christ. For while it would have been easy for you to refute those inconsistencies with interest, it would not have been ours, as in the present case. But to also defend them as if they were friendly, this has come to you from the truth in Christ, which you have set forth in this work of yours, aligning more with those who agree with it, and thus you have stood with us against the Latins, while both sides remain devoted to Christ. I, knowing the gratitude owed to Him above all, will await a reward from Him, both for what I have stumbled upon in your friendship by using arguments on behalf of Aristotle (for otherwise I have never been burdensome to anyone in word or deed for any reason), and for what you, in your old age, were moved not so much to youthful zeal as to speak out—for it suffices to say this, and you would forgive me for saying so much in place of all your many words from every side. And if it were possible, I would have wished in vain to have been united with you in friendship; for you would not have been worse, and it would have sufficed for us to know well that we were moved by no worse reason, according to the laws of both philosophy and friendship, before God and all men. But you have deprived us of this hope, alas, by remaining silent at the end of the book. For no one would easily be persuaded, without the epilogue alone, that you have fully addressed the differences between Plato and Aristotle.

TO PLETHON

35. And I begin a second discourse with God's help, for many are pressing, and they say they will not allow me to overlook it, though I wish to. Therefore, forgive me if I do not obey your command to remain silent, since it is late, as if I had nothing sound to say about anything. And I will touch very lightly on you and what you have written in response, as has been said in the preface, both because of what was said there and because these matters are far from turning me to anger, as if I had been harmed by them. But I might justly be indignant on behalf of the differences with Aristotle, let alone the incomparably greater ones. Yet I have learned to bear with patience what concerns me, no less than Socrates, as you know that admirable saying. Moreover, I am convinced not for the first time by you, but have long been persuaded of my own ignorance, and am more convinced every day. Therefore, I need not concern myself with these secondary contests of yours, especially since they are delivered with such character and are, as they say, the object of my own words' ridicule. Nor need I defend my own works, for as you indicate by contending on their behalf, and having thrown down your earlier writing, you now require other arguments to raise it up again, while at the same time seeking some refuge in not having fully committed to writing. But if they had been well considered (and surely we would not have overlooked them), they would need no assistance, having achieved their purpose well beforehand. From what I will say about the two philosophers, both will receive the fitting response with sober praise.

LETTER TO THE QUEEN

IV. Letter to the Princess of the Peloponnese on Gemistos Plethon's Treatise on the Laws (1454–1456).

† From Gennadius the Humble: A Letter to the Queen Concerning the Book of Gemistos.

1. † To the Most Exalted and Most Pious Lady, my holy Queen, I am deeply grateful to Your Majesty for ensuring that the book of Gemistos, also known as Plethon, was delivered to us, as we have often written about it. Having examined its content in about four hours and then set it aside, we first thought it necessary to briefly inform Your Piety about it, and then, having sought your counsel, to act according to what seems fitting to us regarding it. Therefore, you should know, judging with the most dispassionate and precise criterion of our most pious doctrine, that this sophist is more foolish than all those lawgivers who lived before the divine dispensation and who introduced polytheism and a swinish way of life, as well as those who, after the divine dispensation, dared to establish laws contrary to the true and only Law that guides us on the path of life—that is, the Law brought from heaven by the providence of our good and most perfect Creator. This man, then, is more senseless than all of them, as though he possessed no mature or sound judgment at all, but rather the mind of a child or one who is utterly deranged. What is said about the power of words—that in the soul of a fool, they are like a sword in the hand of a madman—this has also happened to him. For though he received the ability to compose arguments, and perhaps not with insignificant skill, he misused this ability to his own destruction and that of others like him, should any be found, having fallen into error due to a lack of grace, sound reasoning, true wisdom, and knowledge of dialectic. He was led to manifest his error in this way by his frivolity and the aforementioned ability. For such was he, and such was he known to be by those capable of judging. Even if some skill in wisdom was added to him, as is likely, through greater effort and time, it proved useless to him in discovering the truth, as it served rather his wicked preconception, which he himself speaks of concerning the ancestral opinions held by his people.

2. For this man, even before he was perfected in reasoning, education, and the ability to judge such matters—or rather, before he had even touched upon them—was so captivated by Hellenic opinions that he cared little to learn the Christianity of his fathers, except for what is evident even to laymen. It was not for the sake of the Hellenism of language, as all Christians do, that he read and was taught the books of the Hellenes—first the poets, then the philosophers—but rather to attach himself to them. And so he did attach himself, and this we knew precisely from many who were well acquainted with him in his youth. Being thus thoroughly prejudiced, it is very likely that, due to a lack of divine grace and some influence from demons to whom he had devoted himself, he became immovably attached to error, as happened also to Julian and many other apostates. The chief cause of his apostasy was later a certain Jew, who frequented him as one skilled in expounding Aristotle. This Jew was devoted to Averroes and other Persian and Arab commentators of Aristotle's books, which the Jews had translated into their own language, but he cared little for Moses or what the Jews believe or practice. This man expounded to him the teachings of Zoroaster and others. To this man, who appeared to be a Jew but was truly a Hellenist, he not only devoted much time as a student but also served him in necessary matters and was sustained by him. For this man was among the most influential in the court of these barbarians; his name was Elisaeus. Thus, he was shaped. Then, though he tried to conceal his views, he could not, and he began to sow his opinions among his disciples. For this, he was expelled from the city by the most pious Emperor Manuel and the Church, though they did not act wisely in sparing him

and failing to make an example of him to the multitude, neither dishonorably banishing him to a barbarian land nor in any other way preventing the harm that would come from him.

3. Such, in brief, were the causes of his error. He also desired to become a lawgiver, hoping that some would join him. Yet, if he had legislated something entirely new and not yet demonstrated in human life, his audacity might have held some hope. But now, since the books in which the doctrines of the Hellenes are expounded fill every land and island, yet no one cares to follow them, he composed his book from these, having taken very little from them. And to leave aside others, who does not know the works of Proclus, from which he gathered these things? Yet, while he attributes his composition to Plotinus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus, from whom he took little or nothing, he is silent about Proclus, who is most responsible for his way of thinking, and he does not dare to show that he gathered everything more from Proclus's books, which have no other purpose than to discuss the multitude of gods, their generation, order, differences, and activities in the universe, as well as human souls and what pertains to them, and the stars and what he believed belonged to their study according to his own opinion. He does not include Proclus among the others, cunningly seeking for himself the reputation of being the first to produce such things. But those who have thoroughly studied and rejected Proclus recognize the source of Gemistos's arguments.

4. If, then, the books of his teachers, though preserved, have no such power among men, now that the light of the Christian law and doctrine has illuminated the whole earth—not only in terms of divine influence, by which the worldwide error of polytheism was clearly extinguished, but also in terms of human wisdom, with many true philosophers, through irrefutable and sound arguments, overthrowing error and demonstrating the divine and sacred faith alone most excellently, even confirming it in human souls—how could he have hoped, with a single book that abbreviates the works of others and shows nothing new, to persuade men to heed him, unless they were childish in mind or had fallen from divine grace, for which reason they might even attach themselves to more absurd opinions, if such could exist?

5. If he could not see this, it is no wonder, for he was such a one as to neglect the doctrine of his fathers from childhood and to cling to the rottenness of polytheism. The disorder of his chapters is more fitting to a scandal than to a man who has any share of knowledge and sound mind. As for what he legislates concerning political, economic, or moral matters, whatever can be traced back to Aristotle, Plato, or the true law of our Jesus and His followers, or to the imperial laws of Christians, those in each place would be better served by studying these directly in their original form. For he, having abridged them with obscurity, would be of no use to anyone. And what he seems to add on his own is nothing but the most ridiculous.

6. As for the parts concerning sacrifices, hymns to his gods, and invocations of beings who do not exist, which make up nearly a third of his book, it is intolerable even for a Christian to glance at them, not even for laughter and contempt, but only to recognize from the titles the absurdity of the author and the foulness of the book. But the excessively impious parts, in which he shamelessly blasphemes those who follow Christian teaching, calling them sophists, sorcerers, and all Christian things falsehoods and sophistries, whenever he touches on the topics of doctrine, where our true teachings are opposed—these are beyond measure more impious.

7. Such, in brief, is the book. Therefore, though we had previously prepared to write a refutation, now it seems to us not worthy of any response. For he does not directly attack Christian truth but obliquely, by seeking to confirm, as he thought, Hellenism. But to argue against Hellenism is superfluous, since many saints

and most wise men have refuted it opportunely and with great abundance, and God has uprooted it from the whole earth. Yet it is worthy of laughter for its weakness, incoherent babbling, and vain attempt, and of tears for the soul of the author, who wretchedly surrendered himself to demons, though he was born of pious and holy fathers and wise men. It deserves fire, lest it lead astray some foolish or ignorant persons if preserved, and also because the Church has long been accustomed to honor the labors of heretics, especially apostates, by consigning them to the flames.

8. For this reason, we thought it necessary to send it back to Your Majesty, so that through you it might be more effectively destroyed by fire, and you might receive the reward of such piety, with us urging this course. This will also be a deliverance from many blasphemies and just accusations that preserving it would bring upon the author, so that the destruction of the book would be not unpleasant even to those who have loved him, if they are willing to judge rightly.

9. May the Lord preserve Your Majesty by His mercy and grace.

V. Letter to Exarch Joseph on the Book of Gemistos Plethon and Against Pagan Polytheism (after 1456).

† On the Book of Gemistos and Against Hellenic Polytheism.

† Written on Mount Menoikeos near Pherae.

1. Gennadius Scholarius, by the grace of God, to the most honorable and excellent lord Joseph the Exarch, greetings.

2. We always commend your zeal for what is better, which you demonstrate both by neglecting none of your duties and by advising others. Following your own manner, you thought it necessary to remind us about the book of Gemistos. Your counsel came to us when we were already prepared regarding this matter. And so, being grateful to you, we make these things known to you; at the same time, we add what it would be fitting for us not to pass over in silence, and what would not be an unpleasant discourse for you. That man, then, what kind of person he was, had long been clear to us, and that he had written such a book over many years, with many worthy interpreters deserving of trust, and with our own numerous and clear demonstrations, first in the Peloponnese and then in Italy. This was the reason for my writing against him in defense of Aristotle. For he attacked the Philosopher more boldly, knowing that much of his philosophy and what he opposed in Plato provided support for the opinion of truth. And we, not out of rivalry with Plato or particular concern for Aristotle, but out of anger at Gemistos's purpose, chose, out of zeal for the faith, to undertake a labor that was otherwise unnecessary. For we wished to show to those who did not know the man, so that no one would be harmed henceforth by being deceived, as not a few had been before, becoming the subject of grievous pain for us—though it is not necessary to name them. That we looked to these things, not out of any other ambition, is shown very well by the beginning and end of our book, which is preserved in many places, and is not inconsistent with our manner, God willing.

3. He, in turn, wrote a response, engaging in the same contest against both Aristotle and us, as if defending himself. But the misfortune of our homeland prevented us from responding further, except that, under the pretext of another timely matter, we touched upon his untimely arguments, sparingly and with greater gravity. Having bid farewell to Aristotle and Plato alike, we undertook a not insignificant work against Hellenic superstition, as he was clearly fighting against our pious purpose and no longer deemed it necessary to conceal himself. When this work came to his attention, it is said to have greatly grieved the man, who despaired of being able to establish his excellent legislation while we lived, since we could annul it either by fire or by writing, as we threatened in the second of our writings against him.

4. Thus, our dealings with him were, on the one hand, for the sake of the faith and the benefit of our brethren, or to prevent harm that would have occurred grievously; and on the other hand, they were without malice. But some, unwilling to pay attention to the facts and to our conscience and the testimony that supports us, and slandering our character—not only as demonstrated sufficiently in our writings against him but also toward all who have ever encountered us in our whole life—maliciously accused us of envying the man. But we call God to witness, beloved, whom it is not lawful to invoke falsely under any compulsion, that we have never maliciously slandered anyone to their detriment; rather, we have often, out of kindness, indulged in falsehood for the benefit of many, or when deceived, and we have exposed those who lied. For

we showed them to be good and friends to the multitude, and we treated them as such; but they were the opposite in their actions.

5. What reason would we have had to envy the man? For in all that God had given us, we were superior, so that we would not envy anything he possessed. It would scarcely be fitting even for the basest intention to trouble one who pretends to piety and virtue, doing no wrong, and who is inferior to none of his peers, let alone to owe punishment for such great lawlessness, or to be judged worse than anyone, when the truth is revealed late.

6. To such people—though they are few—one should neither pay attention if they praise nor if they blame, knowing them. At the same time, this human experience happens to the worse sort; for some sorrow and tribulation must meet those who do good, if they know how to bear it, as it is very profitable. But those who have understanding and love the truth, and whose judgment is not to be overlooked by those who have understanding, not only loudly proclaimed our works and words throughout much of the earth but also praised and always acknowledged with gratitude what was examined truthfully and impartially concerning Gemistos. They grieved with us for the old man's untimeliness and prayed that he might change, if it were possible, knowing him to be such and not being able to disbelieve us. You see, beloved, how much gratitude meets us continually from men for our care for the common good, behind which we always placed our own private interest.

7. But if many struck us, with God as our leader throughout our life, we have close at hand the witness who received the blow for having spoken no evil, whom we hope will be our advocate in such matters and our comforter, for those who do not run entirely in vain. Since it was necessary for all things to be revealed in time, and the book of Gemistos, after his death, was in the hands of the rulers of the Peloponnese (I mean the more pious and greater ones among the two), and they could not be ignorant of the absurdity of what was written in it, they wished to send it to us immediately, and though many asked for copies, they did not deem it right to give them. But hindered by the circumstances, they themselves brought it to us unexpectedly, and they brought us a double grief: one for them, as we shared in the common misfortune, which others, acting more rashly, had brought about; and the other for the book. For as soon as it was opened, what meeting could have been more unpleasant for us?

8. The book is divided into three parts. Many theses were set forth at the beginning of each, as in a table, preserving no order among themselves—for ordering is the work of a wise man. The first thesis of the first part was about the differences among the greatest opinions held by men; the second, about the leaders of the best arguments; the third, about the two opposing arguments, the Protagorean and the Pyrrhonian; the fourth, about prayer to the wise gods; the fifth, common doctrines about the gods; the sixth, about Zeus the king; the seventh, about the celestial gods; the eighth, about the gods within the heavens; the ninth, about the eternity of all the gods; the tenth, about the generation of Poseidon and the other celestial gods; the eleventh, about the generation of the immortals within this heaven.

9. Then, having woven together ethical, economic, and political theses, he added the twenty-first about the worship of the gods. After this, about priests and their life; then, about purifications. Then, having connected theses more appropriate to logical examination, he added the thirty-first about the names of the most ancient gods; this was the last thesis of the first book.

10. Next, in the second book, the first thesis was about the criterion for examining the proposed matters. The second, about the preconception of common notions. The third, that gods exist. The fourth, about the providence of the gods. The fifth, that the gods are not the cause of evils. The sixth, about fate. The seventh, about the multitude of gods. The eighth, about the differences among the kinds of gods. The ninth, about the piety of the Curetes. The tenth, about the seven most ancient gods and the other celestial gods. The eleventh, about the generation of the gods within the heavens. Then, about the soul, the stars, the soul of the stars, and about demons, and other matters, and that they are not evil, and a refutation of the slanders against demons, and about sensations, and about beasts, and such things, he added the twenty-seventh about the eternity of the universe; this was the last thesis of the second book.

11. The theses of the third part begin with a resumption of the discourse on fate. This is followed by a discussion on the soul. Then, on the purpose of life. Then, on wisdom. Then, on the education of children. Then, on the form of government. Then, on courage, and other such matters, adding the fourteenth thesis on the non-mixing of parents with their offspring. Then, on the generation of the gods. Then, on the cohabitation of one man with many women. Then, on the use of common women. To these, he adds discussions on the eating of meat and other such matters, making the twenty-second thesis about Zeus, as if there were no distinction in him even in speech.

12. To this, he appends some ethical theses and others appropriate to political discourse, adding the thirty-second thesis on the names of the gods, connecting the main points of the theses and the primary purpose of this legislation. For the thirty-third thesis was on prayer. After this, invocations to the gods. Then, hymns to the gods. Then, the arrangement of the use of invocations and hymns. Then, which sacrifices are to be made to which gods. Then, for which actions, to which gods, and how sacrifices are to be made. Then, how the sacrifices are to be partaken of. Then, on the precision required in dealings with the gods. Then, against whom prayers should be made to the gods. Finally, on divination. The epilogue was the last of the theses, being the forty-third, of the third book. Each book was inscribed: "First Book of the Laws Written by Plethon," and so on for the others.

13. The beginning of the entire book was as follows: "These things have been written concerning the best laws and government, by which men, if they understand and pursue them both privately and publicly, may live as excellently and as well as possible, and as happily as is possible for man."

14. Recognizing that the book was full of such misfortunes from the very titles and theses, we wished at once not to proceed further. But since it was entirely necessary that such a work be destroyed, it seemed just to us, as if he were present, to grant the author the favor of not condemning the book in his absence, but to set up as judges the divine Word within us and the conscience of truth, to follow wherever they might lead, and to act according to their verdict. For it is likely that he, having come after others who have labored on such matters, might have found a better defense of his religion and, encountering newer and more worthy arguments, might have been persuaded by them, which ought not to be overlooked. At the very least, he would not be far from pardon, yielding to stronger arguments, not yet examined by the teachers of the Church, but which had entirely convinced him, leaving him unable to argue against them. Yet we knew that he had from the beginning held a wicked preconception. But it was necessary to set up an impartial court for him, and we could not escape, whether the same or worse things than those discovered by others had ensnared his soul, or whether they were better and newer. For sacred theology, which has been our chief

concern throughout our life, and which is of no use to any of the present men everywhere and equally known to us, we would not concede. But as for Hellenic books and arguments, to which he refers himself, we have overlooked nothing, since we are reasonably able to condemn them as they are, not having come to such a state, and since no one, however cunning, could escape our notice.

15. Under such reasoning, in four whole hours, the smallest part of a single day, we went through the entire book, knowing well with what arguments he filled the promises of his theses. Here we were led through many and varied emotions. We laughed at the simplicity of the man. We mourned the destruction of his soul. We cursed the wicked demons, by whom, deprived of heavenly grace, he was seized to be joined to falsehood. We condemned the madness of men, to which they had formerly been enslaved. We gave thanks to Him who freely and late opened the gates of truth to the nature of men and armed them with marvelous preparations, so that they might lay hold of it by taking care. We glorified Him, as far as possible, for having granted us this grace. We lamented the misfortune of our race, the shame, the reproach. For to our evils, this too had to be added, that the last of the good things of Hellenic education was left to an old man, and he repaid his zeal for these things with a shameful derangement of mind. For he could not have innovated such things if he were in his right mind. We grieved for the labors of the old man, which he wasted, having spent his ambition on words and composition on the most trivial theses—as if someone, in the most dishonorable or immediately disintegrating materials, displayed his skill in statues, though he could have used better and more appropriate ones. Why enumerate all the emotions we experienced?

16. When we decided to stop at the titles of the book and the prologue, then indeed our eyes filled with tears, and we sighed deeply (for we thought Gemistos, or rather, as he calls himself, Plethon, stood before us, and had extended his zeal for Hellenism so far that many who heard him relate that he not only adorned his speech but also his own soul in this way—though how, let them say more), then, as if speaking to him in person, we delivered the verdict we had agreed upon concerning the book.

17. "Man," we said, "there is one best law and one best government. But you, having departed from them and joined yourself to the worst instead, then desired to become a lawgiver? Whom did you hope would join you? If you were legislating something new and not yet demonstrated in human life, your audacity might have held some hope. But if the books of your teachers, though preserved everywhere, have no such power among men, now that the light of Christian doctrine and law has illuminated the whole earth—not only by divine influence, by which the error of polytheism has been clearly extinguished everywhere, but also by human wisdom, with many true philosophers, through most true and sound arguments, overthrowing error and demonstrating the divine and sacred truth alone most excellently—how did you hope, with a single book that abbreviates the works of others and shows nothing new, to persuade men to heed you? If this escaped you so greatly, it is no wonder, for you were such a one as to neglect the doctrine of your fathers from childhood and to cling to the rottenness of polytheism. As for what you legislate concerning political, economic, or moral matters, whatever can be traced back to Aristotle, Plato, or the true law of our Jesus and His followers, or to the laws of the pious emperors, one would be better served by studying these directly in their original form. For you, having abridged them with obscurity, would be of no use to anyone. And what you seem to add on your own is nothing but the most useless. As for sacrifices, worship, and such things, and much worse, if you hoped to enact them anywhere on earth, no wise man, no ordinary person, would either wish or be able to imitate them."

18. "But let us leave aside your hopes for praise from men for these laws. You set forth the varied differences among men in opinions and lives, speaking truly; for these things are clear to all who know anything at all. But you fail to recognize what follows from your first theses. For how could your doctrines about the gods be common, when not all men, even according to you, accept them, not now only, but at any time? Rather, now no one accepts them; but, as is likely, while they disagree on other matters, they agree on this one point, that there is one God, not one supreme among many inferior beings, but simply one and only. But show yourself one who, because of such disagreement among men, has been led to seek the truth, not content with what was discovered or judged very well by your ancestors, and you set forth in the prologue, unnecessarily, the variety of paths concerning the end of man, while standing by your purpose, as I have already said. And you say that one who judges what is best concerning all things will think and live well, if indeed he knows how to judge; but you fell far short. Therefore, having made falsehoods firm for yourself before the most true, you became the most wretched of men, and by your own judgment." "Or how could you compare yourself to Zoroaster, whom you say stands above all, having departed from the wisest and most inspired? Who does not know Zoroaster, famous among the Persians for astronomy, having achieved nothing else, by which he was indeed led astray, but otherwise showing a purpose in harmony with Genesis? For he was the son of Ninus, who married his own mother, Semiramis; from this, the Persians thought it lawful to marry their mothers. This man, previously unknown to you, was made known by Elisaeus, who appeared to be a Jew but was truly a polytheist, a man of great influence then at the court of the barbarians, to whom you fled from your homeland to learn good teachings from him. But being such as he was, he met his end by fire, as indeed your Zoroaster did. As for Zoroaster, then, and Minos, and Eumolpus, and Lycurgus, and Polyidus, and Tiresias, and the others you enumerate, you did not encounter their books, from which you might have taken this legislation; except insofar as many others have remembered some of their sayings, from which the knowledge of them has come to you no more than to all earnest men. But you have gathered everything more from later sources, setting Pythagoras and especially Plato before you, though most of what you wrote about the error of polytheism in many books was not even accepted by Plato himself, and after most of them and above all the foremost among them, Proclus, from whose many books you gathered these few things. Yet you say you agree with Plutarch, Plotinus, Iamblichus, and Porphyry, but you are silent about Proclus, who is most responsible for your views, cunningly seeking for yourself the reputation of having first discovered most of these things. But those who have read and rejected Proclus agree with me about the source of these arguments. Then you accuse the guardians of the truth, the most unerring guides in all things, of sophistry and innovation and such things, and for this reason you would never place them."

19. Having departed from these things from your youth and set yourself against your good teachers, whom you claim to agree with, you could not possibly know their teachings, nor whether they truly innovate or are rather established in the first and naturally implanted opinion about the one God among men, having abolished the polytheism that arose from the corruption of human lives and opinions, enlightened and strengthened by God and the Word. And for this reason, you opposed your own judgment to that of your Fathers, which is truly precise and divine, being corrupted not only in other things but also in that you neither knew nor ever wished to learn anything of the sacred. But such a judgment should not be trusted even in the smallest matters by any reasoning. And so that you might seem to say something by calling the guides of truth sophists, and by attacking your poets—though they themselves, with your leaders, whom you chose instead

of the true and genuine ones, became the cause of polytheism—those who philosophized later, transforming it into something greater, as it seemed to them, devised a certain plausibility for their discourse by means of the poetic fables about your gods. But it makes no difference whether such things are fashioned in this way or another, as long as they are fashioned either poetically or philosophically—though it is more shameful poetically. And we, convinced most of all by true arguments about what we believe, and then by many divine testimonies, as if aiding the pious thirst of those who are truly devoted to Him, rely on the faith that arises in us from these arguments. But you, slandering the provision from God, having neither the arguments nor having sought to obtain them, but having attached yourself first to poets, then more to philosophers, whom you mention—some of whom you seem to blame, and many of whom have been refuted by the arguments of true and noble philosophers, and all of whom have been persuaded to despise such nonsense—where do you now place your hope concerning the knowledge of beings, after such a death or flight of polytheism, having yourself alone taken that path? It is necessary to examine and learn about divine things, as this is fitting for the rational nature, and you speak very well on this, but those who examine must adhere to the truer things, which they can do well with the divine, having sufficiently shared in all wisdom and filled with the power of dialectic, possessing not only a theoretical but also a practical mind. For without these, no one can know well what principles to use, nor can anyone follow them without error in discovering, but either positing what should not be the beginning or adding worse things, and not even knowing how they might be connected, they lead themselves and many others astray from the truth. This also happened to you, who rushed into the search for truth without preparation.

20. For not having first examined and learned the Christian doctrine, and then having gone through the opinions of other men, which you found more in harmony with the truer or more common principles, you ran to this. But you, who belong to those who hold to the doctrine of your fathers, and with reason, slander and accuse us, claiming that we are prejudiced, while you yourself suffered this toward the foreign doctrine before acquiring the habit and nature of judging such things from art and nature. Those who know well have recorded you as such, and we, having often encountered you, knew that concerning the true doctrine of Christians, you had no more than the utterly rustic, either to say yourself or to understand others saying. Therefore, while you justly advocate for the zeal for the search for truth, you were not deemed worthy to find its manner due to your own distortion and divine abandonment. Therefore, you have not benefited from the labors of others, and what you expended in this writing will not be profitable to anyone else. You might lead some astray, perhaps, who follow you out of ignorance or some other wickedness. Thus, all things are now vainly wished for by you; rather, not vainly, but the end of your success in arguments and the benefit of those who encounter them has followed you, worthy of such prayers.

21. For immediately, neither common to all, nor divine, as you say, but of absurd men, was your opinion about the gods. For that the divine nature exists and is the cause of all things is almost a common opinion. But to divide such a nature into such a multitude and so distinctly separated was the work of a few, whom you chose as leaders instead of the many and the best. It was once also the work of many, but you say you do not attach yourself to the vulgar, nor to poets, nor to sophists, though you demand nothing newer than they, but only embellish the absurdity of your position with some plausibility of argument. For they also babbled about Zeus, Poseidon, Cronus, Hera, Artemis, and celestial, Tartarean, and chthonic gods, and Titans, and demons, and male and female, legitimate and illegitimate, and such things, more absurdly and shamefully than

the later ones who refashioned them. But those who were truly divine—I am silent about the others, but that great Moses, about whom Diodorus says in the first book of his histories: "After the ancient constitution of life in Egypt, which is said to have existed in the time of gods and heroes, they say that Moses was the first to persuade them to live by written laws, a man great in soul and most capable in life" (for we pass over now the other testimonies about him from God and from men)—this man, then, in the second book of the laws, says: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God is one Lord." And in the book of Exodus: "You shall have no other gods before me," as if establishing this law from God. And the blessed Paul, in the letter to the Ephesians, says: "One Lord, one faith." To these, an innumerable host of divine and most wise men follow, confirming this heavenly truth also by the judgment of reason, and to these the whole multitude of men adheres.

22. For if by the name of God something ultimate and preeminent is understood, it is necessary that God be one. For the preeminent and ultimate is one, not many. And if God must also be most perfect, it is necessary that He be one; for it is not possible for there to be many perfect beings, since it is impossible to distinguish the many perfect gods, none of them lacking anything. And if the distinction, order, and governance of beings are sufficiently accomplished by the first cause alone, whose power extends to all things, even to the last, it would be superfluous and not better for these things to be done through many. And if the nature signified by this name is indivisible in itself, it is impossible for it to belong to another; for the principle of action is indivisible, and it is not possible for it to be common to many. And it is not possible for the divine nature to be indivisible in any other way than in itself, lest it be composite. And by many other arguments and proofs, they demonstrate this doctrine, the most sufficient of which is that each of the other things said about God, signifying some one perfection, could also be predicated of creatures, to whom perfection comes from Him, such as goodness, wisdom, power, unity, and such things; but divinity is a name placed above all perfections, which cannot belong to all together except to the first and only cause of all. Nor does the name of divinity only gather the perfections, but it also connects the manner in which they must be gathered into one; for all perfections must belong to Him, ungenerated, infinite, supernaturally, and above all mind and reason, and most perfectly, and to Him alone must they belong. And therefore, it is good to say of any creature that it is good, or wise, or powerful, speaking truly; for these things are proportionally and truly predicated of the works of God, and the names belong to them. But it is not possible to call any other God except the nature most full of all perfection, infinitely and infinitely surpassing all reason and manner of any being whatsoever. Nor could even God Himself, if He wished, share this preeminence with many natures, though He alone produces every nature, greater and lesser, just as He could not not be God, or not be what He is. But those who introduce a multitude of gods simply posit these things, referring to the earlier ones, not honoring themselves more by this reference than sharing the shame with them, or rather being much worse, as showing them to be the most responsible for their error. And you, giving no account of the multitude, only generate, name, arrange, distinguish, and unite again an innumerable multitude of gods.

23. That no argument could be provided to you for these things is clear from this briefly. For how is it possible, with those you call gods being separated by an immeasurable distance from the first cause, that they are not creatures and servants of God? And being creatures of God, it is not possible for them to be gods and creators of other gods. For these are contradictions, if the precision of the name of God is to be preserved as it should. Nor is it reasonable that those distinguished by such great and such differences of preeminence and subordination should be called gods. If, then, they themselves were works of God and

without divine power, neither having been created, nor having brought forth others, nor having been able to do anything in this universe, so that the first cause alone is truly the only one, whose active power extends through all things from Him even to the last, why did you and your leaders need such labors to fashion by necessity things full of much absurdity?

24. For we, who uphold the true and divine doctrine, believe that God directly created all things, and directly governs and provides for them from Himself, as is fitting for the first cause. But we assign the service of divine governance to servants and His own creatures, to whom this is fitting, knowing well that this is fitting for the divine dignity and beneficial for the unity of the universe, and for the order of its parts, and for the preeminence and subordination of each to each, not given in vain by God. Therefore, to speak briefly, we place the creator Himself directly over the intellectual and wholly incorporeal substances, not without an extraordinary order stretching up to Him and initiated into the divine commands concerning the administration of the universe; which order of theirs, revealed by God through them, we know as well as possible. And to the celestial bodies we assign some of them, which we call the powers of the heavens, being indeed not the causes of their natures or of their being moved thus, but cooperating in the continuity of motion in ways piously and wisely understood. And to the other generated things, both the heavens and every body under them, we assign different things differently, not only to the differing ones but also to the same ones contributing to their coming to be and being thus, as long as they exist. And to men, to the earthly ones, we assign these same things, not without the intervention of the incorporeal beings, whenever they are also worthy of providence through them because of the worth of what is connected and the need. And to the better and immortal, as also separable, we assign the incorporeal substances alone, not without God, not so that they might come to be and be in a body (for this is the work of God alone), but so that they might live better, being cared for. But we do not deem any of them worthy of a name or a work belonging to them from anywhere, nor do we transgress against the one God, applying the highest name to bringing down where it is neither true nor holy, and sharing the honors due to God with servants, and making them creators and fathers of each other, and creators of this universe, and distinctions of kinds and unions, and abductions and loves and other nonsense attaching to the divine nature, which you do not hesitate to say and legislate along with the others.

25. But you might say that our Scripture also allows for a multitude of gods, saying: "The Lord, the God of gods, has spoken," and: "There is none like You among the gods, O Lord," and: "I said, 'You are gods.'" Far from it! For we follow Scripture everywhere, and we understand these things as they ought to be understood, knowing how to distinguish doctrine and the economy of words, whether by custom or by necessity. For we often use homonyms and metaphors when necessity calls, as if someone were to call a man who shines in virtue and surpasses others in human life, and who has been beneficial to many, a sun, or another sun, or a second sun. But no one in their right mind, taking this as a starting point, would fashion many suns, sharing in the nature and yet differing, in order to fulfill their own worse desire and not even seem to conflict with the most evident and true things. For such things are more fitting for jesters, but it is not fitting to jest in matters that are not jesting. And if those who philosophize sincerely about every subject must guard against such things, how much more should men not falsify sacred theology, so that they not only speak falsely about divine things, seizing words like sophists, but also blaspheme and act impiously, building other things on a false foundation. For sacred Scripture, sometimes condescending to the weakness of many, uses

this word metaphorically for creatures that surpass others in some way, or in the administration of inferior things according to the will of the first cause, or in the participation of divine blessedness, or in the preeminence of wisdom and other goods in this life, using this predication to encourage care for a life according to reason and law, through which, as far as is possible for human nature, they will attain communion with the divine, uplifting the minds of the hearers. But what does this have in common with the absurd fabrications of gods in which you boast?

26. Let us examine your wisdom further. You say that it is a common opinion that there are many gods. But it is clear that this is not a common opinion. You ought, therefore, to prove it, but you do not. This is the very thing long sought by men, since you again introduce the common opinion as not common, setting forth the differences about the divine, and then positing, as if legislating, that there are many gods, but not the same in divinity. But as if, if they are not gods in divinity, they would not be gods, so if all are in the same, it would follow that they themselves are gods, being formed by the same divinity, it is impossible for one to differ from the others in nature, and to differ immeasurably, as you say, and for the others to be so distinguished from each other. For those who share in one form cannot have such a great difference, but the name must be used synonymously for them. And if they do not differ from each other in nature, they will either not differ at all or differ in accidents, from which it follows that there are neither many nor one, and many other such things follow. But if they are not in the same divinity, it is clear that they are called so homonymously. Therefore, if all are called so homonymously, and no one is truly and properly God, then either the true divinity is elsewhere, not in all of them together, or they are called so vainly, and there is no true divinity in them or elsewhere. Or if these are impossible, there is one to whom this name belongs monadically and properly, and He alone is God, and there is no other. For He will not only not be the same in divinity with others, but He will also be the same in His divinity, since in God the subject and the nature or form must be the same, lest He be composite. To say the same, He will be the same in divinity for the reasons stated, and there will be one God alone and one divinity thus.

27. If, therefore, there is one God, and especially one because of His supreme simplicity and perfection, it is not possible for there to be many gods by any means, neither the same as Him and each other in divinity, nor not the same. How did you not know, O man, that every rule naturally desires unity? Therefore, even in governments, monarchy is the strongest and most useful, being lawful. And many serve the king, through whom he orders the whole rule, but none of them is or is called king except him. And in the body, though there are many members, there is only one head. And in all things simply, unity corresponds properly to rule and the first cause. And for these reasons, much more must God, being the cause of all, be confessed as one alone, to whom the preeminence is infinite even in relation to the greatest and most honorable of His works. For He does not surpass only in order and cause, being consubstantial with the rest, as the head is to the members, or being of the same substance, as the king is to his subjects, but as a builder relates to a house, resembling the form of will and art in himself, and much more divine and exalted. Therefore, the craftsman sometimes makes the tool of his art and uses it for what it was made by him, but he does not impart the power of building to it, nor does he make it another craftsman, equal or lesser than himself. So also God, by His goodness and will, creates other creatures more honorable than others, to whom He gives more causality and activity to the higher ones. But He does not make them other gods, nor other creators, nor producers of natures at all. For He imparts to them an instrumental and ministerial causality, not what is fitting for creators.

They would be gods, as you surely wish, if He had produced them by the way of nature. But being so produced, even if they were entirely like the one who produced them and the same in divinity, differing from Him only in being produced, and from each other in the order of production, as is the case with all things that produce something synonymously, and in the form of nature. But even so, it is impossible for there to be many gods for many reasons. But you have used the identity of nature and will in God to show that the works of the divine will are the same as the fruits of the divine nature. Then you distinguish the fruits of the divine nature by the nature itself. Then you thus give them the prerogatives of the divine nature, and establish them as gods and rulers of this universe, not only confirming your polytheism thus, as if it were valid (but it is rather invalid, and thus invalid), but also conflicting with our faith. But you do not know that nature and will in God are distinguished specifically and by the nature of the thing. Therefore, they can be produced through them, distinguished in nature absolutely, the lighter difference in the cause reaching the greatest magnitude in the effects, and the divine simplicity is not harmed.

28. What you then connect about your gods, saying that some are children and works of Zeus, among whom Poseidon is first, and others are children of children and works, and some are male, others female, and some legitimate, others illegitimate, and you give them names and orders above the heavens and in this universe, and actions—these things, besides not agreeing with the fitting reasoning about God, are otherwise impossible and incoherent, and are posited without any pretext of proof, but as if someone were telling myths or dreams. Therefore, if anyone wished to refute them in detail, they would do the same as one who wished to contend against myths or dreams. On such foundations and similar ones throughout your work, you build, the last parts of which are worse and intolerable even to the ears of the pious. But your wise leaders will have some excuse, for the divine light had not yet illuminated human nature, and they, seeking the truth, erred partly unwillingly, partly willingly.

29. We say willingly, because they immediately adopted the opinions of the common people, not having first discovered for themselves what ought to be thought about the divine. And first, reverence was given to the elements; then to the stars by others; then to the heavens; then, as they progressed, to souls, which they connected to those bodies, the heavens and the celestial bodies; then to other natures, wholly separated from bodies. But the later ones, mixing all things, set up one God in word and appearance, compelled by truth, but they coordinate all the aforementioned things with Him, and make gods partakers of His divinity, creation, and all honor, and then they add other absurdities; for they could not separate these from the others, from which they had taken their beginning. They were thus. But you, O man, having the true theology of your fathers, why did you rush into incoherent nonsense and devote all your zeal to it? Why, when the truth has illuminated the whole earth, did you choose darkness? Why did you attach yourself to rotten and exiled doctrines, long refuted and having no more power in human souls, as if the books of the Hellenes were preserved for you alone, so that, for the sake of language and the refutation of their absurdity, the purity of the theology in Christ might shine forth, which our Fathers preserved, knowing well that no one would be so simple as to embrace rather than condemn them? What defense will you have before the guardian of truth and every judgment that partakes of truth and reason, having gone from the midst of salvation to the pit, and then having hoped alone to raise up again the polytheism that has been dead for so many years, and all that you hoped for against your own soul? For if you were able, you would have imitated the violence of those terrible tyrants and reopened the way of martyrdom to Christians again. Rather, you have done all that was in

your power; for in one of your last theses, you even legislate the killing of those who would oppose these laws, not only thus resembling him who usurped the office of prophets and lawgivers by the concession of God, but also in your discourses on marriage, wars, sacrifices, food, drink, prayers, and many other things, and above all in the purpose of your undertaking, though he far surpasses you in two great things: for he teaches one God alone, does not greatly conflict with our other doctrines, and had the beginning cooperating with his audacity, and the power to use the sword, and the ability to succeed, having first received it, thus hoping to accomplish what he desired. So in this, he was wiser than you.

30. You, therefore, are worthy of lamentation by all who know and love you, among whom we are, as God witnesses, through whom we alone have cautiously opposed you, otherwise praising and honoring you. But your book must be destroyed, lest it become an occasion of lamentation for others, and bring perpetual disgrace to its author, falling into the hands of those who know.

31. Having spoken these things to him as if he were present, and having folded the book again, I sent it back to the wondrous queen, instructing her to consign it to fire. But she, sending it back to us, said that it rather befits us, for many reasons, to carry out the punishment against the writings of apostates. We wished at once to preserve some parts of the book, those pertaining to natural and logical matters and such things. But having gone through it a second time for this purpose, we found no part of the theses free from error, not only because everything was deliberately referred to polytheism, but also because some falsehood was mixed into the discourses about all things. For when he speaks about the immortality of the soul, he tries to confirm, as much as he can, the return of souls to the body and life in fixed cycles of time, as many speak of reincarnations, and he deems it fitting that they never ascend to the heavenly place, and he adds other worse things. And when he treats of household management, he deems it fitting for one man to be joined to and live with many women. And he introduces nothing but baseness into human life. Wherever he perceives any of our customs or laws opposing his own, he accuses them as sophists, sorcerers, and fools, both those who established them and those who adhere to them. And he filled all the theses of his book with much bitterness against Christians, reviling our things, not arguing against them, as if establishing his own, not proving them. Therefore, no part of the book seemed to me later fit to be left for the eyes of the pious, as it could bring no benefit but could plant scandal in their souls. And apart from these absurdities, nothing fitting for wise ears was found in the theses, but all were the fruits of a very dull mind, so that the destruction of the book would bring no deprivation of any good to men. This should not be said sparingly for the sake of the foolish.

32. Therefore, for these reasons, and because he was not such from his fathers but an apostate, and because our race now suffers from extreme rusticity, not only for the sake of destruction but especially for punishment, we have consigned the book to fire. It was entirely written by his own hand. We left only the tables of the theses fastened to the boards, and the hymns to his gods at the end, so that, if they were preserved, no one could ever falsely accuse our judgment. But all the rest was torn away and given to the fire, and this was done in the sight of many. And since it is very likely that an equal copy exists elsewhere, written by one of his students, whether living or dead, we exhort all, as from God, that if ever and wherever the whole book or a part written in it is found among any Christians, the one who has it should destroy it by fire, but if he hides it and is caught, after one or two admonitions, if he does not wish to burn it openly, such a one should be excluded from all communion with Christians. To that poor man, then, we have shed streams of tears, and we have cursed the day on which the book came to us. For what need had we now of such a

disturbance? So that, by the great reasonableness that God has given, we even humbly asked Him, if it were possible, that the punishments for his blasphemy be forgiven him.

33. But to you, pious and learned soul, most worthy to us, knowing gratitude, as through what you have written to move us to discourse on these matters, though we are beset by many illnesses and cares, we pray both from God for a good life here and happiness hereafter, toward which you direct your life with all wisdom. And do you also pray for our quick deliverance from the evils of this life, and with virtue. Amen. Farewell.

ON THE TRINITY AGAINST ATHEIST AND POLYTHEIST

VI. On the One and Triune God and Against Atheists and Polytheists (after 1456).

† From the same Gennadius, on the one God in Trinity, our Creator of all things, and against atheists, that is, those who believe in chance, and against polytheists.

† Written in the Monastery of the Forerunner on Mount Pherrae.

1. To think that there is no God is the height of folly, as the divine David says: "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'" And if wickedness in men is the work of folly, then it is in some way the same to be good and to be wise, and to think thus is the height of wickedness. For some, utterly attached to sensation and the pleasure that comes from it, give birth to this wicked folly within themselves, and from such beliefs, instead of wishing to live as men, they are carried wholly toward a bestial life. Very few dare to justify their wickedness, since all men, both good and bad alike, laymen and wise, firmly believe that God exists, considering Him the cause of good things for themselves and holding themselves responsible for wickedness and the evils that follow from it, whether they sometimes turn back through more correct reasoning or, remaining in unrepentant wickedness, do not deny their voluntary folly.

2. Therefore, very few, trusting in their own error, and perceiving that others are being carried toward the same precipice as themselves, pretend to be pious toward all, and with their tongue they confess with all others that God exists, but in their heart they hide the poison of folly, and thus they remain incurable. Nor do they gather such a thought of impiety in their mind, for this offspring is far from the mind, but in their heart they give birth to godlessness, sown by the most irrational inclination toward sensation and matter. For if they were able to use their mind and reason, they would have been able at once, if they wished with all zeal, to know that God exists, and the light would have been clearer to them, and all the doctrines of piety that arise from it. And though the works of God, which illuminate the minds of the wise, are beyond the sight of the many, let that be set aside for now, but what is contained in their books is available to those who are able and willing to seek and find, from which it is shown that it is absolutely necessary for God to exist, and that it is impossible for Him not to exist, and beyond all impossibility. We also pass over the common opinion of all men, which has great power for the truth, if indeed there is nothing truer than the principles known by nature to all. For except for the very few who are utterly foolish, as has been said, all have posited and still posit that God exists, so that those who wished to seek what He is and how He is, because of the difficulty in these matters, as is likely for those inquiring about God, were divided into different opinions. Yet they do not depart from the earlier and more common position. They rejoice and hold fast to it with greater wonder, for their inability to understand these things about God by innate reason, nor that these things are in harmony with what is known by nature, they take as a great proof that God exists, if indeed the notion that God exists wisely and fittingly includes that His essence is incomprehensible to the mind and inexpressible in words. Nor do we now set forth the divine revelations of the truth about Him, as they are very fitting for the refutation of the foolish, but we will take them up for another purpose as the discourse progresses.

3. But since those who do not believe in God abolish the creation of all things and the providence of God that runs through all these things, in accordance with the order established in them throughout this universe, and they think that all things exist and come to be by chance, and from this follows every other

swarm of falsehood, it suffices for the present need to ask some of them a few simple and very brief questions about Him alone, and to set forth from a few and very evident phenomena concerning Him the proof of their own folly.

4. O man, you clearly surpass other earthly things by nature, and the earth itself. You are above earth and stone by all the good things of nature in you, united to them only by corporeality, for you are clothed with a body. If you wish, you are also united to them by being, which is common to all beings simply. With plants, you share even more and greater things, for they are distinguished from earth, stone, and all inanimate things by being animate. With animals, you are further connected by the ability to move from place to place, which they also have, surpassing plants. With animals, you are even more closely connected by the ability to perceive, by which they surpass all other things. But to you alone belongs the ability to reason, by which you excel all others. From where, then, comes this well-ordered distinction between you and other things, and among them, running through the infinity of individuals under each genus? Is it from themselves? And if a stone could be a plant, would it choose the lower rank? No more than you, if you were a doorkeeper, would choose to be in the royal chamber instead of standing at the door, if the choice were yours. And would a plant willingly be worse than an animal? And if a horse could have the nature of a man, would it not wish it? Therefore, it is not from themselves, but by chance and accident that they are distinguished? But if such a thing rarely occurs in things that come to be, it is opposed to those that are ordered, defined, and exist according to nature and reason. Therefore, if these did not exist, that would never happen, just as disease occurs because health existed long before. And yet even this does not have an immediate cause for happening in this way for all things alike. But without a cause that produces it, it would never happen, and something monstrous happening once in many cycles of time is a destruction of the natural order, occurring through some affection of matter.

5. Moreover, do you do all things by choice, whatever you do, since you are rational, even if you are free? Because you do not sometimes choose to fly, though you often say, "I wish I could fly"? Or is it clear that you are not naturally able to fly, nor is it possible for you to be both a man and a bird? Why do you not also traverse the depths of the sea, so that you do not feed yourself with so much labor and methods, fishing for fish from above? Or is it clear that you are not naturally able to live in water, just as a fish cannot live on land? Therefore, though you surpass others in the ability to choose how to live, even this is largely determined by nature, and you must not be able to do all things by choice, but are naturally unable to do most things.

6. These distinctions, then, which exist according to each genus and run through the individuals of the genus, so that they cannot have more or less than what is naturally defined for each as good, how could they be by chance or accident, since chance and accident are opposed to what is ordered and defined, and things that are opposed cannot come together? But if things that happen by nature and by human choice are ordered, how could they be without one who orders them? And if they are not ordered by themselves, they must be ordered from elsewhere. Therefore, if you grant that these things happen by higher and more common causes with some order, first, chance and accident are gone. Then the same question would arise about those higher things, which differ from each other by nature and order. For they do not have from themselves the power to act and order in this way among the lower things, nor their own preeminence and subordination. For the moon, if it could, would choose to be the sun, and to do what the sun does among these lower things, rather than what it can do now, since the sun's works are greater and better than what it

can do. And the sun would be the same toward the bodies above it, and there would be conflict instead of order. Therefore, even those higher things are compelled to such order. Hence, they also have immutability continually, and since such order in them is natural and nature in them has a principle, they would have the same cause for being thus and for being ordered thus and for acting thus among these lower things.

7. But again I ask you: are you, perhaps, a builder? And why are you not also a shipwright? And if you are, why do you not also have the craft of shoemaking? And to sum up, why do you not preside over all crafts as you do over one? Is it clear that it is because you cannot pursue all at once? For you must learn much for each craft, and practice more, and thus gain skill by experience. But this would require more time, and the life of each man would not suffice to acquire many crafts thus, and before one could learn all well, death would come, and he would not use any. But men strive to acquire crafts for the sake of being able to use them.

8. But from where do you have the ability to learn one or two crafts? From yourself? And yet the wish to learn would suffice, and thus in a short time you would know all. But you require time for each. Therefore, the ability to learn anything comes to you from elsewhere, like a spark implanted in your nature. And just as you did not come to be by wishing to be—for you did not exist before coming to be—so you did not have this spark by wishing, nor the ability to learn some but not all, nor the inability to learn all equally, nor did you have it by chance. For you would have had it alone, or with a few others, while the rest were naturally unable to learn. Just as among things that happen by nature, there are almost no things said to happen by chance. But all men have the ability to learn, at first indefinitely toward all crafts before beginning to learn, and then defined toward one craft that one begins to learn. If one is more talented, toward two or three, but these toward most, and with difficulty toward all at once. And this natural aptitude for learning many things you have from elsewhere, from where you also have the ability to learn simply. Hence, signs of such skill, as opposed to not being naturally suited for many, are seen in the structure of the body, indicating the inner disposition, which has been well examined by those skilled in these matters.

9. But why are not the same materials subject to all crafts, but different materials are sought for different crafts? For you could not make a shoe and a house with the same whole, even if you knew how to make shoes as well as build houses. Nor would you willingly have such troubles, if you could make both a house and a shoe with the same whole. From where comes this difference in material for the craftsmen? For the materials do not suffer this willingly. And if you wished to use all equally for your building, you could not, as I have already said. Do you see such order even in the crafts and crafted things, where nature is subject to craft, but is clearly ordered in all things constituted by nature, and you have the power implanted to discover which material suits which craft? And is this not reason, assisted by experience?

10. But also, because you begin building from the foundation, then join walls, then lay floors, and raise walls, and finally put on a roof, and then divide and adorn the interior, do you ever do these things in reverse? Or is it clear that you could not do otherwise, even if you wished? For you would sometimes walk on your head, resting on your feet, if you could, as some do in jest to perform marvels. But even they do not use their head entirely instead of feet, for it is impossible. But raising their head with their hands above the ground, they play, using their hands instead of feet. Why do you not build in the sea, nor does the sailor usually sail on land? Or is it because sailing on land and building on the sea could never accomplish their tasks? And to put it simply, you have received the craft of building by learning it, but you use nature and the works of nature.

11. And if you were a doctor, you would use herbs and stones for this craft. But one herb acts in one way, another in another, and not only to cure diseases but also to cause them in those who use them without knowledge or improperly. And some kill outright instead of nourishing or restoring health. And stones do the same, and no one can change their nature by any craft. They are only prevented from accomplishing their own ends by other things naturally opposed to them and more active, and by other methods of craft.

12. From the higher works of God, then, and the well-ordered difference of natures and powers in them, and the most evident and astonishing administration of this universe, which is so very well-ordered, and many other such things, by which all are necessarily led to the notion of the divine, you could, if you wished to learn, understand that nothing among beings and things that come to be happens without order, and that as by a most wondrous chain all things are bound together and distinguished, which could not be from themselves in themselves. Nor would so many natures, so different, have been woven together from the beginning for the constitution of one world without one who wove them together from the beginning and implanted in them the power to be thus woven together throughout, which He alone could also undo, if He wished. But to weave things together thus in order is the same as to create, and to destroy is to unravel. If you also weave different natures together in building, you do not do so as you wish, but as they are woven together, and the application of your craft follows the weaving of natures. Therefore, you only weave and do not create them. But He who weaves together the natural properties in beings is surely their creator. For He creates and establishes them thus, so that they can be woven together for the constitution of one universe, which was His purpose. And for this reason, He created and wove together the parts of the universe.

13. If you were to recognize your Creator not from any of these things, but solely from yourself, your nature, and your works, He who granted you not only existence but also your place among other things—this path we have now laid before you abundantly, in place of many other and wiser paths, not only to expose your foolishness but also to assist you, should you so desire, in beginning from here to perceive the God who made all things. You claim to be the creator of your house, and rightly so, and you acknowledge that the skill within you to create is due to the one who taught you this art—things that were not present to you at birth but came later, after your second stage of life, when you were well-prepared by nature to learn and to work. You do not say that the house came into being by itself—for you would not demand payment for it—nor that the skill came to you spontaneously—for you would not need to attend lectures or promise and provide payment to one who could teach you. Yet, concerning your own composition of soul and body, the soul endowed with such powers and the body composed of so many elements, which are akin to the elements of the world, and further divided into so many parts and members, both homogeneous and heterogeneous, internal and external, ordered in cause and effect, instrument and mover—and that your soul is perfected in virtue and wisdom when it rightly uses the body, but errs in both when it uses them poorly, leading to the opposite disposition—in short, concerning the most intricate and wondrous creation within you, and not only within you but also within countless others who share your nature, you refuse to acknowledge a Creator and Artisan. And you, who are both builder and master of your house, care not only for its initial creation but also for its maintenance, attending to all that contributes to its preservation. Yet, for yourself and your life, you wish no one to be a caretaker or guardian. If ever you need a human for such tasks, one who cannot even help himself, you pay no heed to the only One who can and does help, nor do you wish to acknowledge Him or give thanks. You praise the house as well-made, praising yourself as its creator, yet you dishonor the

astonishing and wise construction within you, denying its Creator. You laugh at someone who says the house came into being by itself, yet you refuse to acknowledge a Creator and Artisan for things far more precious than the house—things that, in relation to the form given by your skill, have the principle of matter, yet are themselves distinct forms shaping the underlying matter in diverse ways. And what is even more irrational, you refuse to acknowledge a cause for yourself and the good within you. What wonder, then, if you are ignorant of the origin and nature of all other things, when you hold such a view concerning yourself, the primary example? But, as I have said before, you have arrived at this foolishness through wickedness and living poorly, and thus, in your folly, you add evil to evil without fear, wandering about having utterly denied human life.

14. Against those who, in their great foolishness, babble in their hearts that there is no God, this has been said as a ready response. And they are less foolish than those who completely deny the divine nature, though those who multiply gods into many also grievously transgress against the one God. For they are so captivated by the order and activity visible in these things that they have chosen to divide the divine nature among them, rather than ascending through reason to the one and only source of all things. They do not know that the causality apparent in these things is instrumental, subordinate, and fitting for servants and creations, not for gods and masters. Nor do they understand that the order in so many diverse things is not caused by them perpetually—for that is impossible—but comes from a higher and primary cause, a Creator and Master who has power over them. Those who attribute incorporeal substances to them as inner movers, and call these substances gods, dividing them not only by rank and order but also by kind and by good or evil choices, have erred no less than the others. For if they were gods, they would not be divided in this way, nor would they be gods if so divided. If they called them gods only in name, this is meaningless, and such a position brings with it a host of other impossibilities and absurdities. That they also deified humans—some for virtue and noble inventions beneficial to human needs, others for the opposite and baser reasons—and that most of them did this while still alive, while others granted divinity even after death, shows how such foolishness prevailed and how all impiety was embraced at that time.

15. From such error, which held sway over almost the entire human race for a very long time, God alone delivered us, for He alone could do so. And now the whole world believes in one God, paying no heed to the senselessness of atheists, which it never regarded even in former times, nor to the impiety of polytheists under the guise of piety. If anyone in recent times has sought to revive Greek polytheism, he suffered from a dullness of mind, and those who might join him would be even duller, choosing exiled error over the most true and common belief of humanity. We have written much against that man's folly, not out of concern for him or his ramblings against sacred truth, but for the sake of the great ignorance now prevailing among many, which contrasts sharply with the wisdom of old and of recent times. For through this ignorance, some of the simpler folk might be endangered, persuaded by the false rumor of that man's wisdom. He partook only of the most superficial learning and gained nothing worthy of it or of the wisdom that adorned it. He did well in cultivating eloquence, but in a most impious and foolish work, which the Latin proverb rightly honors only when it is devoted to truth alone. In these matters, even if one could praise him, he was so simple and hardly different from the vulgar that he could not discern truth from falsehood, so that even a child could refute him, and he could not argue against a child, being a mere experimenter in falsehood. Therefore, he fell into this error, and we, having written publicly against his so-called "best legislation" (as he

titled his book), consigned it to the flames. We were compelled by our love and fear of the Son of God, who assumed our nature for our sake, and of His best legislation, which we could not honor otherwise.

16. Therefore, now is not the time to refute the error of the polytheists, as it has been sufficiently refuted by God Himself and by those who think on divine things, and now only a few, hidden in corners and darkness, perhaps still practice polytheism, not daring to openly oppose the truth that prevails everywhere. For the whole world, as has been said, now believes that there is one God. But since those who confess one God are divided into many sects, it is enough for us and for all who are guided by the divine laws of Jesus our Savior to have Him as our leader, along with His disciples and their successors, and to believe and proclaim the one God as we have been taught by them. Yet, for the sake of those who differ, something must be added concerning this.

17. That the one God in essence is also a Trinity of distinct properties—or, to say the same thing, hypostases—can be demonstrated by many proofs from both the Old and New Testaments. But for those who do not share our starting points concerning divine things, the argument must begin from more common principles.

18. Since the Jews, and others with them, openly deny the Trinity in God, yet accept the teaching of Moses, though not entirely in the same way—for the Jews wholly embrace it as given by God, even if they willfully ignore or distort the teachings concerning the divine economy—it is sufficient for us now to demonstrate the Trinity in God from the teaching of Moses, as the most common starting point for all. We have expounded the most radiant truth of our faith in whole books, not only in public disputations with both sides, but now we will present one thing from a single utterance of Moses. The divine Moses introduces God, in the act of creating the universe in an ordered and well-arranged manner, saying to Himself, "Let us make man in our image and likeness." If Moses is true, and according to them, God indeed spoke thus to Himself, and this is a divine word, then we have from this word clear evidence that God is one—for it says, "God said"—and that a plurality or number is understood in the one God—for He said, "Let us make," as if acknowledging a plurality within Himself. And that man was created in the image of God—for it says, "in our image and likeness"—and very reasonably so, for he was to be honored with free will, through which he would rule over all created things and be their end after God, and also because he was to partake of the divine unity and the number within it. Hence, he immediately partook of it, being one yet composed of many powers in his soul. This divine number was unfolded by our Jesus, foretold by Moses to come. For this reason, having come for our improvement and foretold from afar, He said that believers must be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three, being in one name, share one divinity, and the three are one God. Even before Jesus came, David clearly indicated this Trinity in God, saying, "By the word of the Lord the heavens were established, and by the breath of His mouth all their power." Those who dispute with us cannot contradict David. And from the other prophets, the doctrine of the Trinity in God is well gathered, fittingly harmonized with their prophecies concerning the divine economy.

19. But now, focusing on the human being, created in the divine image, we will demonstrate this doctrine not only from Moses and the God he introduces saying this, but also from the evident truth concerning man, showing that it can be upheld by reason. Every creation is in some way like its intelligent creator, for it is made according to the form impressed on the creator's mind. The immaterial likeness of the creation is communicated to the material in a way fitting to it, and thus the likeness is weak. For just as we recognize a

human by his footprint, so also, seeing a house, we understand it to be the work of a builder and discern the builder's skill and power. By the diversity of creations, we measure the diverse skills of their creators in our reasoning, and this likeness is called a likeness of trace. If this is true of particular creators, how much more so of the universal Creator. But these things are in some way akin to the created, as all created things are of the same kind. The first cause of all creations infinitely transcends them. Therefore, the likeness in them is very faint, the weakness of the likeness in created things making the surpassing power of the Creator evident. But even if it is weak and faint, it is nevertheless true, for it cannot be otherwise.

20. All the works of God are in some way like Him, in that they manifest the wisdom and power of their Creator. For there is nothing, even the smallest thing, that does not evoke wonder, as it compensates for its lack of magnitude by the wisdom and methods divinely implanted within it. Moreover, these works possess both efficacy and utility for many purposes, and all of this is directed toward the providential care of human life. Yet, none of these things is called the image of God; only man, above all other creatures, is so designated. For the heavens and the heavenly bodies are not without matter, and they are merely bodies without souls. Man alone, however, is immaterial and incorporeal in the part that is his soul, as has been said, and thus he alone is intellectual. Even though all other things share a common likeness to their cause in their mere existence—for they exist, and God exists, though the divine existence infinitely surpasses the existence found in all things—some lower beings have a greater likeness in terms of life. But the likeness in terms of intellect surpasses all others and is uniquely proper to man among visible creatures. Angels, being pure intellect from the beginning, partake of this likeness more perfectly than we do; yet, in other respects, this likeness is more fittingly attributed to those among humans who strive for virtue. Therefore, among all visible beings, only man is and is called the image of God, and this is most reasonable. For man is called such primarily in terms of his soul, to which the body is joined as its instrument. The soul of man, in itself, is incorporeal, immaterial, and intellectual. These qualities—divine advantages and perfections of God—though infinitely surpassed by God's transcendence, are nevertheless present in man. Incorporeality and immateriality, being the negation of matter and body, are simply observed in man. Intellectual capacity, however, which places within him a nature and a power of nature, is not observed in a purely simple way but with a necessary distinction. Thus, man, being intellectual by his soul, has the activity of intellection; for the activity of intellect is to think, just as the activity of heat is to warm. This activity is directed toward an end, which is the intelligible object, standing opposite the intellect as its goal. Intellection is intermediate, like a common relation connecting both, proceeding from the intellect and belonging to the intelligible, and it is defined by this, so that the boundaries of intellection are the intellect and the intelligible. The intelligible must be a form and likeness of the thinking intellect, just as the principle of intellection is the thinking intellect. I say this because when the intellect thinks itself or its work before it comes into being, the form derived from abstraction is primarily a likeness of the external reality, through which the reality is understood. It is also a likeness of the intellect, as it becomes an intelligible object and like the intellect. The intelligible form is in the intellect when the intellect wishes to remain within itself and in such a state. But when it wishes, it also proceeds outward, either manifested in spoken word or placed into matter, if it is of such a nature. We say that as long as it wills, the human intellect exists and lives by two activities: thinking and willing, with the will also being intellectual, just as intellection is. These activities have different ranks in the intellect according to their different perspectives. For intellection is primarily prior in reason, and willing follows. Yet sometimes

willing precedes intellection, for the human intellect does not only will what it thinks but also thinks in a way what it wills. This requires further explanation, but for now, we will proceed to the matter at hand.

21. The human intellect, while in the body, thinks of things above itself dimly, yet truly, as in an image of their truth, provided it follows its own true principles of such contemplation. This is the task of the pious who are guided by true wisdom and prudence in divine matters. Speaking more naturally now, we do not refer to the thoughts revealed divinely to the saints. The intellect also thinks of things akin to itself, kindling the spark of knowledge within itself through effort, learning, and discovery. It thinks of these things more perfectly, as they are proportionate to its power; the more earnestly it strives, the more perfectly it understands. It thinks most perfectly of its own works, not only understanding them as already made but also having thought of them before they came into being, as things that would be brought into existence and later realized because it had first thought of them in this way. The intelligible form in the human intellect, which is the principle of its intellection, is not the form itself but that by which it thinks the form, whether the intellection remains within or proceeds outward, making the intellect either theoretical or practical. This intelligible form is the intellectual word of man, through which the human intellect, so to speak, converses with itself. It is a product of the intellect through the activity of intellection and its perfection, wisdom, and truth. The intellectual will shapes the spirit within man, about which it is said that no one knows the things of man except the spirit of man that dwells within him. This intellectual will extends both to the intellect itself—for the intellect wills itself, just as it thinks—and to its own good, since will is directed toward the desirable, just as intellection is directed toward the intelligible. As truth is the intelligible, so the good is the desirable. Thus, as the intellect wills its own good, it also thinks, and in willing, it knows that its intellection is its perfection. The intellectual will of man extends both to the thinking intellect and especially to its works and creations, in which it is most active and most clearly manifested.

22. Thus, the human condition, to summarize, is such—though it is filled with much complexity—and the human intellect, with its intellectual word and intellectual will (or rather, intellectual love), possesses its own perfection and is shaped by these three intellectual properties. To speak of the human intellect is the same as to speak of the human soul, understood broadly as intellect and more narrowly as soul. To speak of the human soul is the same as to speak of man in the proper sense, as has been said before.

23. All these things in man come from the first cause and the creating God, so that, according to what has been established from the beginning, God possesses these things eternally and inherently, though in an infinitely higher manner, as has been said and will be further demonstrated. Hence, man is said to have been made in the image and likeness of God because God has likened him to the Trinity within Himself. Therefore, it is right to transfer what has been said about the image to the archetype, where it is more clearly and fittingly theologized, as the teachers of the Church proclaim daily. For the one and simplest God by nature, the sole Creator of all things according to the divine Scriptures, is a Trinity of properties and hypostases, an intellectual Trinity befitting the first intellect and cause of all created intellects—namely, the divine intellect, His intellectual Word (the innate fruit of the unbegotten intellect's intellection), and the intellectual Love (the fruit of the first intellect's inner will). For God, being the wisest and best intellect, not only from the likeness in us but also by all necessity, eternally thinks Himself, for He is the truth, the end of intellect and intellection. He also eternally loves Himself, for He is the good, the desirable end of the intellect and intellectual will. In thinking Himself, He eternally conceives the Word within Himself, and in willing

Himself, He eternally brings forth Love. Thus, in bringing forth the Word, He thinks Himself by the Word, and in bringing forth Love, He loves and wills by it. These innate offspring and products of the intellectual fertility in God are not only truly brought forth by Him but also distinguish themselves by the manner of their procession, though they are naturally united with one another and with the originating intellect. The divine Word is the cause of all intellect and intelligibility in existence, and indeed of all substance and nature. For not only the originating intellect but also the works understood through Him bear His likeness, though not in the same way. Hence, the Word is called the innate image of the begetting and ever-begetting intellect, the transcendent idea of created things, and He is both with God and of God, through whom all things have come into being. The divine Love, the Holy Spirit, is the cause of all good in beings, for He holds all things together and turns them toward the good. Thus, with them, there is one God, the Father and Creator of all things, and all things, from the first to the last, are the works and servants of the one God and His innate Trinity.

24. The blessed and divine Trinity is the cause of the triad in man, and our human triad is in some way the cause of our ability to know the divine Trinity, as this is the first benefit we derive from the image of God within us: the ability to know the true, primary, and universal cause as Trinity. This we say concerning those who still understand imperfectly, even in the introductory stage. For those who have striven more perfectly to know, or who have received this as a gift from God, the triad within us is more accurately understood from the divine triad. Hence, it is no wonder that many are ignorant of the divine Trinity, since not all know or are able to know their own nature. Nor should we marvel at the differences between the triad in the archetype and the image. For it has been said that man is likened to God, as reason demands and as the testimony of Moses and other supporting authorities affirm, and he is likened to the Trinity of inner activities by which man exists and lives according to the soul and excels over the rest of God's creations. Yet, in God, the Trinity must be transcendent, befitting the Creator and wholly divine, while in man, it exists with the limitations proper to a creature. For the divine intellect is eternally in act, as befits the eternal and infinite, while the human intellect, created by God, is initially in potentiality in all men equally, capable of understanding and being perfected through those things, but it comes into act later through knowledge, as the forms are gradually gathered within it by the process of abstraction. The human word is formed in each individual by many forms, which are gathered little by little within him and remain in the manner of a habit. The divine Word, however, is one and the simplest form of the simplest intellection in the first intellect. For the divine intellect, the Father, eternally thinks all things in one and the same act of intellection. In thinking Himself, He establishes the intelligible form of Himself, the Word, and in thinking the Word, He also thinks Himself. He also thinks other things apart from Himself, eternally knowing them as future, with the abundance of His power bringing the act of intellection to what will be as if it were present. He knows them as having come into being when He willed it, for they are works of the divine will, which is also beneficent toward others. For He always willed the world to exist, but He did not will it to exist eternally, for it could not have existed eternally, as this would imply either that it never came into being or that it exists without ever having come into being. Thus, this eternal intellection is one and undivided in the first intellect, distinguished only by signs of intellection.

25. In the human intellect, thinking about a thing is one thing, and thinking about the thought of that thing is another, especially when the intellect turns to its own work. Hence, the knowledge of things is

different from the knowledge of the thoughts about them. In God, however, these are not distinct. In man, the word and the will are not practically distinguished from the intellect that thinks and wills. But in God, the divine Word and the Holy Spirit are practically distinguished from the Father. For in God, the unity of nature must be supreme, as befits God, and the distinction must be true and practical, yet without in any way opposing the unity of nature. The individual and personal distinction, which in creatures of the same nature has its cause in matter, reasonably divides the nature among those thus distinguished in number. But in the simplest and most intellectual God, having only an intellectual reference as its cause, it does not divide the natural unity. There are likely many other differences between the uncreated Trinity in God and the created triad in man. Yet, despite these differences, the likeness in the triad of properties or hypostases remains. Moreover, in terms of their procession, order, the reason for their procession and order, and the unity of essence in their plurality—and, in general, their intellectual nature—though there is the greatest transcendence in God and the greatest limitation in man, even in the creature, much difference in the image is observed. For the image was given to all men as a common gift, the beginning of greater communion in the future life for those who use it well. Yet not all enjoy it equally: some shape this most noble preparation of nature within themselves through their own choice and effort, causing its beauty to shine forth and ascend even to the heavens; while for others, it remains something idle and formless, concealed by ignorance or wickedness.

26. All these things concerning the divine Trinity have been and must be said to those outside, as from a common starting point for us and them, the teaching of Moses. But to us, faith in these matters has been implanted by the divine Word Himself, beyond all reasoning. For this reason, having truly and divinely assumed our nature, He adorned us with true doctrines about the one God, the sole cause of all things, and with laws for living rightly, delivering us from the former disorder that the father of lies had heaped upon us, though he could not have done so if we had kept all that was required. Glory, therefore, to the Word of God and the Son, who has bestowed so many good things upon us humans, not only with all His beings and works but also above all things, and continually, not only to all in common but also to each individually. For He eternally held us and the entire world within Himself intellectually and brought us forth temporally, creating time itself as a work of His paternal and wise goodness. He also fashioned us spiritually through a wondrous mode of economy and with a single method healed our long-standing and manifold disease out of the same goodness, as the best physician, father, and master. He formed us in life and faith, teaching us and unfolding the mystery of the heavenly Trinity, through which alone it is possible to worship the one God rightly and genuinely. He became our guide not only through teachings but also through His own example, compelling us toward neither of these two goods—for it was not fitting to destroy instead of save—but by removing the obstacle to eternal life unexpectedly, the corruption passing through the seeds of our race, which He emptied Himself and endured, and by paying the penalty owed by us in the flesh, which did not sin. He entrusted to the free will of His children both to believe and to live rightly, though not without His assistance, given the difficulty encountered in both in many ways. He revealed to us God the Father, having been revealed by Him in every way. He also revealed to us the Holy Spirit, for a greater revelation of Himself, though He had been revealed by the Father at the appropriate time, as the seal of His blessings upon us. He directs the life of each of His children, those formed by faith and free will, for it is necessary to choose the better things with a whole inclination of the mind, and grace immediately meets those who have so chosen. Why enumerate all

the things that surpass reason in their multitude and magnitude of visible beneficence, or remain hidden and unknown only to those whose spiritual eyes are impaired? For even if it is in some way particularly referred to the divine Word, our Jesus, yet the beneficence of the divine economy was one, from the Father through the Son in the Spirit, out of a single, harmonious love for humanity, and from there the medicines of all happiness and salvation were and are continually mixed for us inseparably. Thus, to hymn the divine Word is the same as to glorify the entire Trinity, or rather the one God in three persons. To Him be glory forever, amen.

REQUIREMENTS OF A BISHOP

Pastoral and Ascetical Works.

I. What a Bishop Must Know and Teach.

† What the bishop must necessarily know and teach to others: – Here, he speaks concerning the twelve articles [of faith] and the seven mysteries [sacraments]:

1. The sacred Dionysius defines the hierarch as one who stands between God and men, elevating those under him to the First Cause. The manner of this elevation is through a twofold turning, as the divine hierarch accomplishes it: for by turning toward those under him, he prepares them to receive the divine rays, and by stretching upward toward the primal Goodness, he seeks forgiveness for their transgressions and participation in divine grace for those under his care. It is impossible for them to partake of the good things that come from above without the mediation of the hierarch; for the divine mysteries are the instruments through which grace is dispensed to souls, and the hierarch is the celebrant of these mysteries, making him the instrument before all other instruments. In what way does he make his subjects receptive to the divine gifts? By correcting both faculties of their soul—the cognitive and the appetitive—freeing the former from ignorance and deception, and detaching the latter from its inclination toward apparent but unreal goods, redirecting it instead toward what is truly desirable. This is achieved by exposing the nature of each faculty through reason. With what kind of knowledge does he fill their intellect? Clearly, with that which leads to their proper end, for without this, they cannot attain the blessed end. Indeed, it is the concern of the hierarch to fill the intellect with the whole truth of existence, for in this way he must also teach them the sciences. However, those sciences that seem to contribute nothing to the end have been set aside as superfluous. Only what is necessary is commanded to be taught by the one entrusted with the Church. Since it has been shown that the instrument by which the priest prepares his hearers for deification is the word, we must consider what this word is and which of its parts are the most essential. The didactic word, which concerns the one girded with the high priestly dignity, is immediately divided into two parts: the theoretical and dogmatic, and the practical and ethical, the latter being named from one of its parts. For the practical includes the ethical, the economic, and the political. Having first taken up the theoretical and dogmatic, we will later briefly discuss the practical.

2. The theoretical and dogmatic discourse has many and varied parts, which are scarcely comprehensible even to those who have devoted their entire lives to the study of the divine Scriptures. However, lest the multitude, being uninitiated in the saving words, fall away from salvation, it seemed good to the God-bearing fathers to gather and set forth the most essential and necessary points, making this the rule of right faith even for the least experienced in Scripture. Let those who are eager to know the whole of theology devote their entire lives to the study of such matters; but for the sake of the less experienced, we must divide the necessary teachings into their proper parts, as far as possible. Thus, the chapters of the pious faith deal first with God and what pertains to Him, second with the economy of the Incarnation, and third with the future state of things. Concerning God, some teachings pertain to God Himself, and others to His works. Concerning God Himself, some pertain to the divine nature, that it is one, and so on; others pertain to the distinction of persons, their number, and their properties. Thus, there are two comprehensive chapters

covering all the doctrines concerning God. The third concerns His works, which are His judgment and providence in the economy of the Incarnation. First, we believe in the seedless conception; second, the incorruptible birth; third, the sufferings, that is, the Cross, death, burial, and descent into Hades; fourth, the resurrection from the dead; fifth, the ascension into heaven and the sitting at the right hand of the Father; sixth, the future descent from heaven. These six, added to the previous three, complete the number nine. In addition, there are the teachings concerning the future state: first, the resurrection of the dead bodies; second, the judgment and the recompense according to each one's deeds; third, the endlessness of the age to come. These, added to the previous nine, make the number twelve. Such, then, is the division of the chapters that must be believed. Since each of these contains many different meanings, it would be best, for the sake of clearer teaching, to explain each of them more broadly in the appropriate order.

3. First, then, we must believe that there is one God, the Lord Almighty, who rules over all things that exist beside Him; and there is no other besides Him, nor is the source of all things a plurality, but a unity, as He Himself said to Moses: "I am God, the first, and I am after these things, and besides Me there is no other." Second, we must believe that this one God is not one hypostasis or person, as the Jews think, but a Trinity of persons or hypostases, however one may wish to call them. Of these, one person is unbegotten, while the other two derive their existence from the unbegotten: one by generation, the other by procession. The name of the unbegotten is Father; of the begotten, Son; and of the one who proceeds, Holy Spirit. The property of the Father is unbegottenness, that is, not being from another and being the essential cause of the Son and the Spirit; the property of the Son is being begotten from the Father; and that of the Holy Spirit is proceeding from the Father. We confess that these three—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—are not three gods but one God, one essence, one power, one energy, one lordship, one glory, coeternal and coequal. Third, we must believe that all things, whether visible or invisible, that exist apart from the divine nature are creations of the trihypostatic Godhead, brought from non-being into being by God, who is the cause of all things. They are not coeternal with God but began to exist when the sensible world needed to be established, not from preexisting matter but brought into being and substantiated by the cause of all things. Fourth, we must believe that all things are governed by God through the ineffable words of His wisdom. Fifth, we must believe that the Son of God, remaining unchanged and unconfused, assumed a perfect human nature from the holy blood of the Virgin Mary, who had no experience of man but was overshadowed by the all-holy Spirit, who formed the flesh. Sixth, we must believe that while the Virgin remained a virgin, the Lord came forth, preserving her virginity both in childbirth and after childbirth, just as she knew no pleasure in conception, so she felt no pain in childbirth. He came forth as the same one, both perfect God and perfect man, having assumed an ensouled and rational flesh, so that He might provide salvation not to a part, and especially not the worse part, but to the whole man. Seventh, we must believe that this God-man Lord suffered in the assumed nature for our sins, while His divinity remained impassible; He was crucified and died willingly, not by the compulsion of nature, and was buried, with His holy soul descending into Hades and leading out the righteous who had been confined there from ages past. Eighth, we must believe that He rose from the dead, that is, His soul was reunited with His body, which was made incorruptible after the resurrection. Ninth, we must believe that after forty days from His resurrection, He ascended into heaven and sat at the right hand of the Father, that is, the assumed nature was honored with the glory of the Only-Begotten and henceforth remains inseparable from His divinity, worshipped and glorified together with the

Word. Tenth, we must believe that at the consummation of this world, He will come again from heaven to earth in the glory of the Father to judge all rational nature. Eleventh, we must believe that all human bodies, from the first to taste death until the consummation, will rise again at the time of the consummation, not as other bodies formed anew, but as the same bodies reconstituted, not corruptible as they are now, but incorruptible, and each will be reunited with the soul it lived with, to receive the recompense for their deeds. Twelfth, and last of all, we must believe that the state after the judgment will be eternal and without end. For creation itself, freed from corruption according to the divine Apostle, will remain forever in the freedom of the children of God, unchanged henceforth. The rewards for the righteous will be everlasting, and for the condemned, whether through unbelief or a wicked life, the punishment will be endless and immortal.

4. The theoretical and dogmatic discourse, as we have outlined, has many and varied parts. Since we have said that the other part of the didactic discourse is the practical, which many are accustomed to call the ethical, it would follow to briefly discuss this as well and bring the didactic discourse to a close. To expound on this more scientifically—to speak of what virtue or vice is, whether it is a habit, an action, a right deed, or a sin, and into how many parts each of these is divided—would be too lengthy for our present purpose. Instead, following the custom of the God-loving Fathers who excelled in piety, and using their terms and concepts, we will say this: There are said to be seven oppositions in human actions, of which some are praiseworthy and called virtues and right deeds, while others are blameworthy and forbidden by the divine laws, and these are called vices and sins. These are reasonably distributed among the faculties of the soul, assigning one to each, but they are all attributed to the appetitive faculties, leaving aside the rational activity, since their purpose is not to discuss every virtue and vice of the soul but only those that bring punishment. The vices concerning the intellect bring no punishment. The appetitive faculties are divided into two: the rational, which is the will, and the irrational, which is further divided into desire and anger. To the will, they assign three vices: pride, vainglory, and love of money; and three virtues: humility, lack of vainglory, and lack of possessions. To the desiring faculty, they assign two other pairs: the virtues of fasting and purity (or temperance), and the opposing vices of gluttony and fornication (or lust). For the Fathers choose to express the same thing through each of these terms. To the spirited part of the soul, they say two other oppositions naturally belong: one virtue, courage (or endurance), and its opposing vice, cowardice (or despondency); and another virtue, freedom from anger (or gentleness or long-suffering), and its opposing vice, irritability. What each of these is, how it arises, and from where it originates is not the place to discuss now. The virtues, then, are humility, lack of vainglory, lack of possessions, fasting, purity, endurance, and gentleness. The vices are pride, vainglory, love of money, gluttony, fornication, despondency, and irritability. It should not escape notice that the Italian tradition combines vainglory and pride into one, adding envy to the list, and thus maintains the number seven, calling these mortal sins. But now is not the time to discuss mortal and non-mortal sins. To make this clearer to readers, even if they are less experienced in such matters, I will present it using the more familiar terms from both Churches. The virtues, then, are humility, lack of vainglory, lack of possessions, fasting, purity, endurance, and gentleness. The vices are pride, vainglory, love of money, gluttony, fornication, despondency, and irritability. Such, then, is the didactic discourse by which the God-imitating hierarch prepares those under him to receive the divine lights, as we have outlined in each of its parts. Since the word of truth has shown that the hierarch, having prepared them for the reception of light, must seek

from God the divine gifts for them, which the worthy must receive through the mediation of the mysteries, it is necessary to discuss the mysteries in the same manner.

The Seven Mysteries:

5. These mysteries are also seven in number: Marriage, Holy Orders, Baptism, Chrismation with holy myrrh, Communion (also called the Synaxis), Repentance (or Confession), and the Anointing with Oil. That these are the only ones and no more is shown by their division. For a mystery either pertains to the generation of human beings, and this is marriage in the Lord; or to salvation, or it sets apart a person and a place, being celebratory of the mysteries, and this is Holy Orders (ordination) and the consecration of churches; or it concerns what is accomplished through them and in them. These immediately confer grace, while Holy Orders confers grace immediately on those being ordained and mediately on the rest of humanity. Of the immediate mysteries, some are necessary for every person, though not in the same degree, while others are necessary only for those who have sinned after Baptism. Baptism, Chrismation, and Communion are useful to all. Baptism confers divine being; Chrismation imparts strength to the soul; and the Lord's body is spiritual nourishment, for the one born divinely also needs strength and suitable nourishment. The two mysteries useful to those who have sinned after Baptism either grant forgiveness of sins or cleanse the stains ingrained in the soul. The first is the mystery of Repentance, and the second is the Anointing with Holy Oil. These are called mysteries because they accomplish something intelligible and hidden through sensible symbols. Each mystery is instituted by Scripture, has a defined matter and form, and also a defined efficient (or instrumental) cause. For example, in Baptism, the defined matter is water; the form is the words the priest speaks after the invocation: "The servant of God, [Name], is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"; and the instrumental cause is the priest, though the ecclesiastical canon does not reject Baptism performed by the non-ordained in cases of necessity. Similarly, for each of the other mysteries, a defined matter and form can be found. What each contributes to our salvation has been said; now we must briefly state the origin of each.

6. First, Marriage was instituted from the beginning by the God of all, who joined Adam to Eve. The Lord also honored marriage in the Gospels, both by performing a miracle at a wedding and by addressing the Mosaic law, which permitted divorce by giving a certificate of dismissal. He said this was not so from the beginning but was allowed because of the hardness of heart of those who received the law, adding, "What God has joined, let no man separate." The Apostle also declares marriage honorable and the marriage bed undefiled, calling it a mystery: "This mystery is great, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." Thus, this mystery was handed down from above and confirmed in the New Testament, as has been said. Second, Holy Orders, leaving aside the shadowy priesthoods before the law due to their obscurity, was most clearly handed down by the God of all through Moses and Aaron, suited to the worship under the law. Those deemed worthy of such rank in the grace of the New Testament were first chosen by the Only-Begotten, as the divine oracles testify: "You did not choose Me, but I chose you out of the world." They were perfected at Pentecost, when the all-holy Spirit descended upon them. They, in turn, passed on this gift to their successors. Third, Holy Baptism (I speak of our Baptism, leaving aside its types for now) was handed down by our Lord Jesus Christ both in deed and word: in deed, by His own Baptism in the Jordan by John; in word, by His command to His disciples: "Go, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and

of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Fourth, the mystery of Holy Chrism is not explicitly mentioned in Scripture but was handed down by the disciples of the Word, as the most holy Dionysius, taught by the divine Paul, records in his sacred writings. The Church of God honors him as a man second only to the apostles. Fifth, the mystery of the most holy Communion was typified in the legal sacrifices but was truly handed down by the Lord on the evening before His Passion, when He ate the legal Passover with His initiates. After eating it in the manner handed down to Moses, He instituted the new sacrifice. Breaking the bread and distributing it to them, He called it His body; then, giving them the cup filled with a mixture of wine and water, He declared it to be His blood, commanding them to do this in remembrance of Him and to proclaim His death whenever they did so. Sixth, the mystery of Repentance was typified in the law of Moses, who commanded sacrifices for sin, but it was fully and truly instituted by the Lord Himself, who gave this authority to His disciples, saying, "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." To Peter, He specially promised to give the keys of the kingdom of heaven: "Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." When Peter asked how often he should forgive, the Lord replied, "Not seven times, but seventy times seven." Seventh, the Anointing with Oil was likely handed down by one of the apostles, but it is clearly recorded by the holy Apostle James in his catholic epistle: "Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone sick? Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil; and the prayer of faith will save the sick, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him." This, then, is what he handed down, and it has been celebrated ever since. These, then, are the mysteries of the Church, handed down in this number and manner, through which the initiated partake of the heavenly gift. It should not be overlooked that the primal cause of all these mysteries is the precious Passion of the Lord, from which, or through which, grace flows to those who partake. The explanation of this, however, belongs to another occasion and purpose. Let those who read this, knowing the earnestness of this work, forgive us if we have handed down these great and heavenly things in such brief words, yielding to the request of a God-loving friend and preferring the reward of love to the labor of precise and ornate speech, seeking not the beauty of words or harmony but the correctness of doctrines.

TO THE MONKS OF SINAI

II. Letter to the Monk Maximus Sophianos and All the Monks of the Monastery of Sinai (1454–1456).

† To the most honorable among monks, Lord Maximus, known in the world as Sophianos, and to all the most pious hieromonks and monks dwelling in the holy monastery of Sinai.

† Most honorable among monks and most beloved to us in the Lord Jesus, we pray for grace, mercy, and peace to be upon you from God Almighty. The letters of your piety first came to us; after being opened by us, they were sent to the most honorable exarch, Lord John. From them, as well as from the most honorable elder, Lord Joachim, and his disciple, Lord Gregory of Sinai, we learned of your health and rejoiced. However, when the monks clarified for us the scandals occurring there, we were deeply grieved, for the enemy of truth, the devil, has found pretexts and agents to shake and overthrow the holy monastery of Sinai, which is not only a haven for the monks who dwell there but also a refuge and spiritual guide for all Christians in those regions, a place of pilgrimage for local Christians to venerate and remember the ancient holiness of the holy site, the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our own pride. We, too, have been found weak in these days, as you will learn from the monks, but this situation has grieved us more than our weakness. Therefore, moved by holy zeal, we have compelled these pious monks to return quickly. You will learn more from them, but for greater assurance and clearer faith, we write briefly and in simpler terms so that all there may understand these things and the souls of all may be at peace to the glory of God.

1. First, know all of you who dwell in the holy monastery of Sinai, most pious and holy hieromonks and monks, that the resignation of a bishop from the episcopacy is not valid unless he goes to the Church that ordained him and to his archbishop or patriarch, states his reasons, and receives permission to resign, and another is appointed in his place. Many have attempted this, but their patriarch and Church did not allow it, and they remained bishops with full authority. Therefore, if the most God-loving bishop of Sinai, having been advised or directed by the most holy patriarch of Jerusalem, continues to hold the leadership of the monastery and the episcopacy, do not be scandalized by this. Instead, receive him with full confidence, for whoever does not receive him will fall under the judgment of schismatics and scandal-mongers.

2. Second, a bishop or archbishop is obliged to celebrate the liturgy with a deacon in the metropolitan church and in the assembly of the laity for the sake of good order, grandeur, and the dignity of the episcopacy. However, in his own cell or in a chapel, he may celebrate alone and be sanctified wearing only the phelonion and omophorion, assisted by one monk. For the priesthood of the deacon depends on the priesthood of the bishop or priest, and therefore a deacon cannot celebrate alone. However, the priesthood of the bishop or priest does not depend on the deacon, and thus they can celebrate without a deacon. A bishop is a priest, but a ruling priest, as the name itself indicates. Therefore, if a priest can celebrate without a deacon, much more can a bishop. This is how the most holy patriarchs of blessed memory—Lord Euthymius, Lord Matthew, and others—celebrated in the chapel of St. Theophylact near their cell in the patriarchate's catechumenate. However, in the cathedral church, they celebrated festively with the full order of clergy. Therefore, the bishop there can celebrate alone just as those holy patriarchs did in St. Theophylact, for there is no city, no laity, and no worldly people there, but only a desert, a monastery, and monks. Moreover, necessity and custom allow for this. If, therefore, no deacon is found, should the sanctification of the bishop

and the monks who are to be sanctified through him be delayed? No. We further distinguish that even the most holy patriarch of Jerusalem, if he happens to lack a deacon during a great feast, does not delay his liturgy or the sanctification of the Christian pilgrims, the order, or the custom. Instead, it is possible for him to don the sacred vestments within the sanctuary and stand inside, at the place of the holy table. If there are other priests, they also stand inside, and one priest alone performs the entrance with the Gospel and presents it to the patriarch. Similarly, in the great entrance, the same priest alone performs the entrance with the holy gifts and presents them to the patriarch, and thus the holy liturgy is celebrated. Then the patriarch sanctifies the people, as is customary or necessary. The same applies to every metropolitan and bishop when the liturgy is unavoidable and no deacon is found.

3. Concerning the bishop from Bosnia, he is Orthodox, for he is Serbian. Just as some Latin teachers, when they went to another part of Bosnia, made many of the Koutougérians submit to the Roman Church, so he has striven to make the lord Herzégovina and as many as possible in another part of Bosnia into Orthodox Christians under our Church. If only some of our own would do the same! But where is such zeal? He is doing much good there, as we have learned. That lord, however, does not openly separate completely from the Koutougérians due to fear of losing his authority, using this as a cover to draw others with the bishop's help. In his heart, he has been a Christian for a short time, which is why he sends alms to Christians. If he were not a Christian, he would not waste his money in vain. Therefore, if you ever commemorate the bishop, you are not harmed, for he is Orthodox and was ordained by the legitimate patriarch of his region. It suffices that he will never need to celebrate in the monastery. If it happens that in time he is revealed as duplicitous and hypocritical, you should not grieve as though deceived. For our Lord said, "He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet," and so on, and the blessed John said, "Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God." Therefore, the holy Church accepts the confession of men and is satisfied, for no one knows the thoughts of men or the future except God alone. If he brings alms from that lord, accept them, especially for his benefit, that he may be strengthened in Christianity. Do not, however, commemorate that lord openly in the liturgy, for he still hides his Christianity. But at the thanksgiving of your table, in the presence of the bishop, if you wish to pray for him, saying, "Lord God, preserve the life of the lord Herzégovina and number him among the true sons of the Church, perfected in his pious faith," and to say "Lord, have mercy" for him in unison, there is no hindrance. The pious and philanthropic ascetics in their intercessions pray for all God's creation, that, if possible, all may be corrected and receive mercy.

4. The monks also asked whether it is permitted to give the Panagia (All-Holy Bread) to Armenians or Latins who come as pilgrims. We say that you should give them the antidoron (blessed bread), for they are Christians and come from such great distances to venerate the Lord's tomb. Even if they are separated from us due to certain matters of faith and are heterodox, they still seek our sanctification as Christians, with faith and piety, and we ought to give it to them. For the saying, "Do not give what is holy to dogs," and so on, refers to unbelievers—that is, Jews, Saracens, Greeks (pagans), Manichaeans, and others who pretend to be Christians but are not. Hence, it adds, "Lest they turn and trample them underfoot and tear you to pieces." Dogs, then, are those who trample and tear, but those who seek the holy things with faith and piety and receive them are not such. Listen also to the Lord's words: "He who is not against us is for us," and "The one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out." Only the great mystery of Communion should not be given

to them, not only because of the surpassing holiness of the mystery but also because this mystery represents the whole divine economy, and its perfection requires the prior confession of the symbol of the true faith. Therefore, it must not be given to those who hold false opinions about the divine economy or theology and oppose the Catholic Church. However, if any of them, wishing to remain there or falling ill, renounces their ancestral belief and confesses the faith of the Catholic Church, you may deem them worthy of such communion. This is the custom of the Catholic Church of Christians. Therefore, even the most holy patriarchs, when they celebrated festively, did not drive away Armenians and Latins who came and stood with all piety during the liturgy. Instead, they allowed them to depart with the Orthodox, to venerate and kiss the patriarchal hand, and they blessed them and gave them the antidoron. For as disciples of Christ, they did not cast out those who came to them. It suffices, then, that you do not seek or receive sanctification from them, for they are heterodox and separated. But if they themselves seek sanctification from you, you must not turn them away, as we have said.

5. If the patriarch of Jerusalem is elected for money or, having been elected, manages the local lords for money, do not be scandalized. For in our regions, the episcopacy and priesthood are bought and sold, and this evil began less than fifty years ago. There, those who take the money are of a different faith, and those who give it do so out of necessity, for it cannot be otherwise. Therefore, the philanthropy of God allows this, and the knowledge of discernment understands it. But what happens here is a great sin, for both the sellers and the buyers are Christians. Yet, after the righteous chastisement of God, how much have we striven to stop this evil? We have given the example of our own life and conduct, for we have ordained no one by taking anything from them. On the contrary, we have made many bishops at our own expense, since they were captives, yet otherwise useful and necessary. But even so, we have not been able to stop the evil. Nevertheless, we do not reveal the passions of the ecclesiastical shepherds, we who know them and are aware of the strictness of the sacred canons. Rather, we conceal them, lest scandal arise in the souls of the people, lest the condemnation of the shepherds lead them to contempt, then to doubt about the faith, and finally to complete unbelief. And we would be subject to judgment, and the saying would be fulfilled in us: "Do not be overly righteous, lest you act impiously." For all legislators and judges consider the times. We know that bishops who willingly transgress the canons are subject to the judgment of God, but the Christian people receive from God the reward of their sincere reverence for them. If, therefore, we endure and conceal these things here, where the actions are voluntary, since we cannot correct them, much more should we do so there, where there is greater ignorance, long-standing custom, and unavoidable necessity. We say the same concerning other canonical transgressions: do not be scandalized, but leave the judgment of the transgression to them if they transgress willingly. If it is due to ignorance or the unavoidable necessity of the times, they too are worthy of forgiveness before God. You, however, maintain obedience and unity, looking to the preservation of Christianity. For we assure you in the Lord that whoever in these times insists on enforcing strictness in the customs and orders of our Church, as it was in the freedom of Christians, is an enemy of Christianity and attempts the impossible. But whoever yields a little to preserve the whole has an apostolic mindset, and God will judge him accordingly.

6. We also assure you of something more universal, as from God who enlightens the hearts of men. Know, then, that the meticulousness in the order of the Church's mysteries, the episcopacy, the sacrifices, the psalmody, the feasts, the monastic life, and in all things simply was not present from the beginning of

Christianity but arose later. It began in the time of the great Emperor Constantine, when the ecumenical councils also began. The wisdom and care of the Church's stewards and the freedom and boldness of Christianity, as time progressed, filled out this meticulousness. But before the great Emperor Constantine, for three hundred and eighteen years after the economy of our Lord, Christianity had simplicity in all things, not such variety. Yet even in such simplicity, our Jesus bore greater fruit among men. For hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands beyond number died daily for the name of Jesus throughout the world, and Christianity advanced daily through the blood of Christians who were not meticulous. The heavenly place was filled with angels from the earth, for many were baptized and immediately led to martyrdom, either voluntarily or betrayed by others. And now Christianity is like it was before Constantine. We have no kingdom, no free Church, no boldness, as then. The meticulousness was not yet discovered then, but now it exists in books. Yet there is no one to teach it, no one to learn it, and the will of the shepherds who know it is cold. Even when there is the will and knowledge, they cannot maintain it due to the necessities of the times, which our Lord foretold would be so violent that, if possible, even the elect would be led astray, but the one who endures to the end will be saved. Yet we must not despair or lose heart because we do not now find the meticulous accuracy, nor should we trouble ourselves or others. Rather, we should give thanks to God that in such obscurity and coarseness, Christianity remains in many parts of the world, among many nations and languages, and under so many trials from unbelievers. Yet the multitude of trials does not cause people to waver in their faith, but they are ready to die when necessary. Who, then, would dare say they are not martyrs in intention? Who would demand from them another accuracy and meticulousness that the times do not permit? Christians in the East and West bear witness to the faith of Jesus daily and endure indescribable sufferings. Shall we despise some or be grieved because they forgot the number of the morning Gospel and perhaps read the ninth instead of the seventh, or sang the fourth tone instead of the first, or such things? Therefore, as we have said, keep and do all things with good discernment, and let there be no scandals among you monks and clergy, lest this become a hindrance and obstacle to the zeal of the lay Christians and their reverence for you. And for such reasons, do not separate from the bishop or judge the patriarch's economy, which the times compel. Take care of the stability of the holy monastery, for, as we have said, it is a haven for Christians, a glory, and a pride. Pray to the Lord to have mercy on you and the other Christians there, and may the trials from the unbelievers not increase. But if the trials increase, may His grace also increase your endurance and perseverance. Always prepare for this with harmony and love, and let each one keep his promise and the order he has received from God. Let the one who keeps it correct the one who does not, if he can, and let him not judge. As for your bishops, as we have said, ensure only that they are orthodox and do not teach or enforce any doctrine contrary to the true faith, nor concelebrate with heretics or schismatics. The rest is due to their ignorance and the evil of the times, and they are forgivable, or it is due to their will, and they alone will answer to God. But you will have the reward of your obedience to them, through your reverence for God, intact. For, as we have said, Christianity is now at war, as before, and in this war, our General Jesus does not demand meticulousness, nor do those who think according to Jesus, nor is it possible now to know or maintain it. Do not accept the words of the foolish, proud, and scandalous, and if any stranger comes from outside and is such—that is, causing scandal—drive him away.

7. If you keep these things, all matters of the holy monastery will proceed well to the glory of God, and the enemy of human salvation will retreat. We firmly promise you salvation from God, seeking the holiness

of His holy place, which you have taken upon yourselves. We make these things known through your piety to all the monks, our sons and brothers in Christ.

8. To your specific question, most honorable among monks, Lord Maximus, we respond as follows: The great mystery of the most holy Communion advances the spiritual life of those who partake, for just as it is visibly bodily food and drink, so in its inner meaning it is spiritual food and drink. However, the partaking of the mystery alone does not bring about the increase of heavenly grace. Rather, the proper preparation of the recipient is required above all else. For whoever eats and drinks unworthily, according to the divine Apostle, does not receive grace through partaking but even loses the grace they already possess due to their unworthiness. Not only do they not receive spiritual life and health, but they also fall into bodily illnesses and sometimes even death. This is why he says, "Many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep." Just as the effect of the mystery comes from God through proper preparation for it, so also when someone has the proper preparation for it, the effect of the mystery is not hindered by the absence of partaking, if some unavoidable necessity prevents partaking. For example, the ascetics in the deserts, who partake of the mystery once every ten, twenty, or forty years—many of whom even depart this life without partaking—daily receive the advancement of their spiritual life directly from the grace of Jesus, which advancement is the effect of the mystery. Therefore, if you, with God's help, have the proper preparation for the great mystery each day (and this preparation is either continual attentiveness or a return through repentance), do not grieve if you are prevented by some unavoidable and involuntary reasons from receiving the mystery. Instead, be assured that you are receiving the effect of partaking—the advancement of your spiritual life or the removal of sins that hinder this advancement. If it is possible, you may do as you wish, but we would not advise any private monk to carry the mystery with him to places, times, and circumstances where it is impossible to maintain the continual honor, attentiveness, and reverence owed to the mystery. For it will not suffice as an excuse for the one carrying the mystery to say that due to this or that reason, they failed in some way to give the full honor and care owed to the dignity of the mystery. They will be answered, "Since you could have the fruit of the mystery, if you wished, even without partaking of it, why did you tempt the Lord your God?" This, however, we say concerning private monks. Concerning ordained clergy who are able to celebrate the mystery, the discussion is different.

9. May the grace of the Lord and His mercy be with your honor and with all the brothers. May we also be deemed worthy to fulfill the desire we have for that holy place.

† February 6th.

† The servant of the children of God, the humble Gennadius.

TO JOACHIM OF SINAI

III. Letter to the Monk Joachim of Sinai.

† To the most honorable among monks, Lord Joachim:

Since this matter escaped our notice and was not included in the letter to the holy monastery, we write this privately and in our own hand for your better consideration and for the assurance of the brothers. If a hieromonk, a secular priest, or a deacon comes from Crete, the Peloponnese, or other islands of our nation, and you have any doubt either about the one who ordained him—lest he held Latin views—or about the ordained man himself—lest he concelebrated with or commemorated someone from that party—or even if you know something clearly, yet such a man wishes to remain in the monastery, to repent, to give a confession and a promise, then receive him as a priest and concelebrate with him. We say this not only because of the needs of the monastery but also for the sake of truth and the order of the Church of Christ. For we ourselves have done this in the patriarchate: we have received the repentance of all such men who gave a confession, and we have examined the world. For we have followed the holy councils, and those councils followed our Lord Jesus Christ and God, who before His Passion ordained the Apostle Peter as bishop and shepherd of the world, saying to him, "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church, and I will give you the keys of My kingdom," and so on. Yet Peter denied Him three times; then he wept, and God accepted his repentance and restored to him the grace of the episcopacy. Therefore, even if some ignorant and hard-hearted men imitate the Novatians, do not become like them. Instead, follow the councils, our Lord, and us, the humble, and accept their confession and priesthood. And may the Lord be with you.

RESPONSE TO TO DESPOT OF SERBIA

IV. Responses of Patriarch Gennadius Scholarius to the Questions of George, Despot of Serbia (1454–1456).

† From Lord George to the most holy and ecumenical patriarch, Lord Gennadius Scholarius: Responses of the patriarch.

1. The book of the Bulgarian [St. Clement of Ohrid] has been received by the Church, for it contains almost nothing of his own but is rather a compilation of the works of other saints, especially Chrysostom. He was a wise and orthodox bishop. If anything in the Serbian books seems unhealthy, it is due to the ignorance of the translator or copyist. The book of Xanthopoulos has also been received by the Church. However, if it was poorly translated into Serbian, it may seem to say something incorrect or unorthodox in places, but in its original language, the entire book is orthodox. The "double catechesis" is only used in pre-sanctified liturgies. The sanctified water of Theophany is received before the antidoron.

2. Question: Concerning the Panagia on Holy Thursday.

Response: The elevation of the Panagia on Holy Thursday is performed according to the custom of other days, but it is done in the sanctuary, not at the table of preparation. Therefore, it is preserved and partaken of, when necessary, before the antidoron.

3. Question: Concerning Judas.

Response: Judas lived a short time after his betrayal until his death, as recorded in the book of Acts.

4. Question: Concerning a defiled altar.

Response: If the altar is defiled, regardless of the cause, it is first sanctified, then the liturgy is celebrated. Even if forty days or more pass, the liturgy is performed without hindrance or distinction.

5. Question: Concerning a priest or layperson drinking water at night.

Response: If a priest drinks water at night due to thirst caused by overeating or evening drunkenness, he cannot celebrate the liturgy. A layperson, however, if they drink water more than six hours beforehand (unless due to illness), may receive the blessed bread (antidoron). One who abstains from the sanctified gifts out of piety benefits more than one who partakes, even if there is some minor obstacle.

6. Question: Concerning a priest who does not arrive with the other priests who performed the proskomedia. Can he still celebrate the liturgy?

Response: A priest who arrives after the proskomedia cannot celebrate the liturgy, even if some improperly and shamelessly join the service up to the first entrance.

7. Question: Concerning the Cross.

Response: Those who say the wood of the Cross was taken up into heaven do not know what they are saying.

8. Question: Concerning an archbishop and patriarch.

Response: The ruler of the land and the synod of bishops can appoint an archbishop and patriarch, even if the place where his throne was previously located is no longer under their control. For example, the metropolitan of Naupaktos resides in another city because Naupaktos is under Latin control and does not accept him, yet he is still called the metropolitan of Naupaktos. The metropolitan of Russia is called the metropolitan of Kyiv and all Russia, yet he resides in Moscow because Kyiv is under Latin control and does not accept him as an orthodox bishop. Similarly, when Constantinople was under Latin rule for sixty-three years, patriarchs of Constantinople were appointed in succession and were so named, yet they resided in

Nicaea, where the imperial court was then located. However, where such an archbishop or patriarch resides, no other genuine bishop can be present. The existing bishop is either transferred to another church or, if not, becomes a titular bishop for the common good.

9. Question: Can a bishop or patriarch celebrate the liturgy without a deacon?

Response: Every bishop can celebrate the liturgy alone and without a deacon if he has his own altar in his cell and no one else is present except his attendant. However, in his metropolitan church or even in his own sanctuary, with many present, he cannot celebrate without at least one deacon.

10. Question: Concerning one who tonsures himself without the consent of his spouse.

Response: One who is bound in marriage and tonsures himself without the consent of his spouse sins. The bishop examines the case, and if the tonsure was done out of persuasion or contentiousness, he reunites the person with their spouse. If it was done for a divine purpose, the monastic state is not invalidated.

11. Question: Concerning a defiled vessel.

Response: If a defiled vessel is valuable, it is sanctified; if it is of little value, it is discarded. Similarly, food that has been defiled is also discarded.

12. Question: Concerning one who vomits. Can they receive Communion?

Response: One who vomits today can receive Communion tomorrow. If it is urgent, they may receive on the same day if the illness is life-threatening and they have not had the opportunity to receive beforehand. If someone has an illness that causes them to vomit everything they consume, there is no necessity, for the grace of God supplies what is lacking due to human weakness, provided the person has repented and confessed. If the vomiting is due to drunkenness and not illness, and there is no urgency, or if it occurs on a fasting day, they should abstain for a few days, repent, and then receive Communion according to the discretion of their spiritual father.

13. Question: Should animals killed by wild beasts be eaten?

Response: Animals killed by wild beasts or by children are not considered carrion and may be eaten. However, animals killed by a woman should not be eaten.

14. Question: Concerning the third heaven.

Response: The third heaven, into which the blessed Paul was caught up, refers to the third mode of the contemplation of God. The first mode is contemplation through the images of God, that is, His creations, as Paul says: "The invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood through the things that are made." The second mode is intellectual and natural, when the mind separates itself from the contemplation of the world and worldly passions and devotes itself entirely to the study of divine and eternal things according to the teachings of faith and the laws of God. At this stage, the mind is illuminated by divine light, and some foresee future events, like the prophets. The third mode is intellectual and supernatural, when the mind is elevated by the will of God to the revelation of divine and heavenly things, which the future day will reveal to the worthy, and they see these things not in faith but in knowledge and understanding. More accurately, the third heaven is the outermost and final heaven, also called paradise. There are three heavens: the first is the fiery heaven containing the stars; the second is the crystalline heaven, or firmament; the third is the outermost sphere where the souls of the saints ascend and from which they will descend at the Second Coming to receive their bodies, which will then be raised and perfected. For now, though the souls enjoy heavenly blessedness, they are incomplete because their bodies are lacking. For man is not merely a soul but a

soul with a body, and God did not unite the rational soul with a body in vain, so that once separated, it would never be reunited. Rather, it must be reunited with the body, which will then become incorruptible. Thus, the third and final heaven, the intellectual paradise where the angels and the soul of Paul dwell, is the place where Paul was caught up. Paul's soul, longing to depart and be with Christ, and the spirits of the other saints are there. Paul was caught up to this heaven. It is uncertain whether this occurred with or without his body, for it is impossible that his body, still subject to corruption, was taken to heaven. When the body becomes incorruptible, light, and radiant, like Christ's body after the Resurrection, it will ascend with the soul to the heavenly paradise, the place of the blessed. The question remains whether the soul was temporarily separated from the body, leaving it dead until it returned by a miracle, or whether the soul remained in the body. Paul was caught up to heaven, being both naturally in his body and actively in heaven, so that the mysteries of the heavens might be revealed for the benefit of the world, which is a greater miracle than the former.

15. Question: What does "pure nard, very costly" signify?

Response: In ancient times, Moses commanded that the holy anointing oil be made from four kinds of spices, with which the priests were anointed from head to foot. Of this, the prophet David says, "It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down upon the beard," and so on. Moses appointed skilled artisans to prepare this oil, and this is what "pure, very costly" signifies—that it was made with skill. The four spices are: myrrh, fragrant cinnamon, aromatic cane, and olive oil.

ON THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE

V. Pastoral Letter on the Fall of Constantinople. Gennadius Speaks of Renouncing the Patriarchal Dignity (1455).

† From Gennadius, the patriarch, concerning the capture of the city and his resignation from the episcopacy.

† Written in the Monastery of Pammakaristos in Constantinople.

† The humble monk Gennadius to all beloved in Christ Jesus, who live according to reason and law.

1. Many have written to me, expressing astonishment and concern, saying that in the past, even concerning lesser matters, I was eager to write and did so extensively—matters that almost no one else in our time had the ability to address. Yet now, after the most beautiful city on earth has been so pitifully destroyed —a city that was also the common homeland of the Hellenic people, replacing many individual homelands as long as it stood—I have not deemed it worthy to offer any word on the tragedy that has befallen it. Yet, though I have spoken of such things extensively in private to those who have been near me since the disaster, and though I have mentioned it in some letters in passing, I have not written anything formal about it. For at that time, it was impossible to write about what was constantly before us out of necessity, nor was it fitting to weave such matters into my writings, as it seemed best to use the present circumstances to exhort my fellow countrymen to virtue by reminding them of our misfortunes. I have not yet written anything of substance, nor have I defended myself against friends who reproach me for not having undertaken such a task sooner. Now, however, as the first year since the event has passed, I consider it an appropriate time for such words. At the same time, I justify my silence through this work and offer it not only to those who expected to encounter such a composition from me—whether they wrote to me or not—but also to myself, for I too am in need of such words at this time. I would gladly hear others speak such words, if they were able, provided they spoke something sacred and from God, not the idle talk of the many. I say that I need this not for my own sake but for the benefit of others, who deeply desire to know the truth about these matters. As for why I did not write sooner, I leave it to others to examine and determine; they will not find it difficult, though the discernment of most today is exercised more in trivial and useless matters than in what is real and beneficial. Yet this will serve as a sufficient apology for the one who needs it, and I make it the preface to the discourse that follows.

2. First, then, I give thanks to the eternal Word of God, the Creator and Overseer of all good things within us, our Lord Jesus, that He has deemed us worthy to return, at least in our intention, to the voluntary state of humility promised to Him, even though we had strayed somewhat or seemed to do so. For though we have never willingly humbled our souls through the works of true piety and through awareness of the natural and voluntary wretchedness within us—and thus we are humbled by our sins, with God permitting it—He, in His kindness, sends the gifts of His paternal love to those who earnestly humble themselves, gifts that truly exalt man. At the same time, He heals our prideful wickedness, either with a blend of paternal and lordly discipline or by exacting the fitting and just penalty. Therefore, though we have never been humbled as we ought, we have always had, and still have, a great longing for the form and path of humility. This is the goal and heartfelt desire of our life, and we hope in the compassionate Jesus that He will one day conform our

unworthy soul to His humility in this corruptible body, removing the shame of pride from it. For our pride, having extended beyond ourselves, has disfigured both our reason and our body. We trust that He will not leave our thirst unquenched nor, being full of compassion and mercy, allow us to be hindered by the wretchedness of our passionate nature, our worse habits, and our thoughtless neglect of the good that is within our grasp. Moreover, finding in the just Judge that the reward for a life lived in the freedom of a perverse will is not only the enslavement of the body but also of the mind, we not only submit to the will of Providence, which governs all rational beings with the most exact justice tempered with kindness, but we also entreat Him to regard our chastisement as a healing remedy rather than eternal rejection. We hope and believe this to be so, and we bear it most gladly for this reason. We know well and rightly that just as the sufferings endured here for Jesus are not worthy to be compared with the surpassing glory that will be revealed to those who have chosen to suffer with Him, so too the brief tribulation here is not worthy of the redemption from eternal condemnation for those deemed worthy to be chastened by the mercy of God. Nor is a lifetime of repentance, even if sincere, sufficient to atone for a single day's sin. For to depart from the good through sin, if it leads to death, is to depart from it infinitely, since the good is infinite. How much more so when the sins are many and of a kind that offends against divine love! Yet knowing again that repentance derives its power neither from itself nor from those to whom we are accountable, but from the all-powerful grace of God, we place our trust in the mercy of Him who justifies even the ungodly when He wills and counts faith as righteousness to those who believe in this way. Thus, we calm the turmoil and faint-hearted grief that arises in us during tribulations, caused by our natural wretchedness and the looseness of our will, by reflecting on the reasons for our chastisement and by hoping for the benefit that comes from trials, with the Lord Himself assisting us, especially through the great comfort He provides in the midst of tribulations. For these reasons, we endure, waiting for Him who allowed these trials to deliver us from them, whether they are prolonged for a greater purification or made sharper for a quicker cleansing.

3. With these pious reflections as my preface, I ask God to enlighten me and not leave me in my ignorance, and I now turn to the rest. Let none of you who will hear this discourse be surprised if I connect what is personal to me with what is common to all. For now, writing for the first time about both after the most just execution of heavenly judgment against our transgressions, it would be neither fitting nor necessary to separate them. Perhaps this will be the last time I write of these things, not only unwillingly but also with great reluctance, for it is often right to renounce the ambition to speak of such matters, as it is more conducive to the life we desire. The other sufferings of the city that is no more, and through it of all the Greeks in this region—sufferings that are manifest not only to us but also to those beyond—I pass over in silence, for they are more fittingly lamented with awe-struck silence than with elaborate discourse, and with tears not of grief but of hopeful repentance over the causes of these evils. I will only write as much as I deem fitting to say and for prudent ears to hear. That our homeland would no longer endure for long but would soon be enslaved had long been firmly impressed upon the souls of all who saw the power of our enemies continually growing and Asia rising against us, while the city itself was being stripped of all strength and had reached the extreme of old age in all its parts. That this would be the year in which the long-dreaded event would occur was hidden from most, who were carried away by vain hopes and by things that were not only contrary to nature but also impossible to be granted by God. Yet there were some who foresaw it clearly and spoke with great boldness, while the poor emperor listened, as did all the leading men of the city. For

since they cared for the freedom and salvation of their fellow countrymen, they diligently sought and found, from the resources given to them by God, both the impending judgment of God and its causes, as well as what they ought to do to be delivered from it and saved miraculously by Him. By resources given by God, I mean not only those given to them but also to others, if they had chosen to use them. First, the knowledge of the most sacred oracles in both divine legislations and the most certain belief in their truth, and that until the consummation of all things, what God has promised and threatened will follow those who have once undertaken to keep His laws and have been enrolled in the most sacred polity, from which He leads them, purifying and perfecting the spirits destined for eternal life through their pure submission to such laws. Second, the knowledge of God's manifest administrations, by which He governs all things from the beginning according to the sequence of the eternal law. These we have understood from both sacred and human histories, as He has willed to make them known to those who pay attention, so that knowing the laws of divine governance as far as is possible, we may conform our will to them as far as it depends on us, and thus cooperate with divine providence in governing our lives. Through this, we may receive the just improvement worked in us by the grace of God, which accomplishes all things through our cooperation and alignment with His saving laws, according to the definite judgment of God that follows such works, either leading us to higher things, to which the natural desire of men tends, or casting us down to worse things, where we are drawn by our perverse will. This is especially true when some, called to repentance by the final trials and the critical point of their illness, remain unrepentant before the best Father, Master, and Physician. In addition to these, the longer and more precise experience of human counsels and deeds, through which we, as men, discerning not only what is near and obvious but also what is hidden in distant and foreign matters, seldom err in our dispassionate judgment. From such resources, some, as I have said, having examined our whole life, found what was to come and showed it to all, both privately and publicly. They advised what must be done to be saved. By "what was to come," I do not mean absolute destruction, but the sharpness of the trial that would certainly come, so that by returning to pious and prudent reasoning, we might be delivered from it and greatly blessed, or, if we remain in incurable wickedness, be utterly crushed. For while divine goodness seeks our salvation, divine justice prepares our chastisement, and in a wondrous and admirable harmony, the outcome is left to our choice.

4. Yet those who foretold these things were not believed, nor did they persuade by their counsel, nor did they teach by their instruction, nor did they convert by their reproofs, nor did they move by their supplications, nor were they deemed worthy of the salvation promised by God when they interceded with Him as they ought, offering themselves ready for death in the failure of their promises. Both they and their words were disregarded. Yet before the onset of these calamities, God still sent them good things through men. What prevented them from turning to Him? For they did not deny the universal turning away from Him, nor did they demand that all good things be done immediately, but they asked for a firm commitment and a brief, fitting trial, so that they might either conquer with such hope or die with a surer hope of the life to come through repentance. Or, if they wished, they could live as they pleased after being delivered from the calamities by God in whatever way He chose. Yet it would not have been pious for God to deceive those who had once made such a commitment and had received such great favor, nor would they have been unaware of it, nor would pretending have benefited them. But we were all so stubborn and intractable that even the appearance of turning to virtue was exceedingly difficult. These matters would indeed be the subject of a

great history in due time. But we have now touched on them only so that all may learn more fully from this discourse, except for those who willingly do evil and wrong God, who already knew that the terrible things that befell the metropolis came plainly from God and from heavenly judgment. The power, skill, and machinery of the enemy that overcame us derived their strength from no other source, making escape by human means impossible. Only God was ready to deliver us if we did what His forgiving goodness demanded of us—not merely by turning to the daily reading of His laws, which were held in reverence only by hearing among our more zealous, but also by many signs and proclamations explaining them, so that it would not seem that these things happened merely by following nature. God foresaw so much for our moral improvement and salvation beyond all others who had ever received such things from Him, whether they were converted and saved or hardened and perished. For He granted the Ninevites only three days for repentance, and others a little longer, but to us He proclaimed a whole year for repentance, being accustomed never to punish a city or nation in the heat of their wickedness without such warnings. Moreover, our all-wise Judge, foreseeing that we would perish according to the eternal foreknowledge of our incurable wickedness, allowed our wickedness to be kindled and to respond to the preparation of His judgment, so that we dared to commit our usual sins more shamelessly and to undertake what we had not yet dared more boldly, leaving no righteous plea for divine mercy to rest upon, by which He might justify the delay of His abandonment before His justice. There were those who cried from afar that fears and hopes would come together, so that being shaken by fears more than necessary and emboldened by vain hopes, we might openly burst forth into the final absurdity, and then God would bring judgment, so that neither would we have any excuse for murmuring, nor would the severity of His judgment against us become a stumbling block to those who saw it from afar. Rather, God would be sufficiently justified in His judgments against us. "You have uncovered their sins," it is said, "that Your judgment may be clear." This method of divine economy in such matters was proclaimed from afar by Paul after the prophets and is discerned by all the inspired men after him. This mystery was proclaimed in the marketplaces, at the crossroads, in palaces, and everywhere by those who knew it and were compelled to preach it. By this divine judgment concerning us, it was brought about that no human care or effort, however great, could contribute to our timely salvation, nor could anything appropriate be planned—indeed, the enemy ensured that nothing was planned. And from where we hoped to be delivered from calamities, we suffered them all the more. In addition, we owed shame to all men, with some justly blaming us for one thing and others for another, and some even blaming the same things but not for the same reasons or from the same perspective. Thus, not only did we have nothing trustworthy toward God, but we were also untrustworthy toward men. All these things surely happen to those who are abandoned, whom, once the grace of God has left, it is no longer possible to think, do, or desire anything healthy. The manner of our plundering is the greatest sign of divine abandonment. Lest I touch on the foreigners, to whom the most critical parts of the walls were foolishly entrusted, or on the locals, none of whom acted in a manner befitting the magnitude of the dangers, or on how both were clearly driven to flight by heaven, I will not mention any of them now but will only recount the sacred oracle.

5. "For when the Jews did such and such," it says, "and to put it briefly, they left no sin uncommitted that they did not commit beyond the nations, God mixed for them a spirit of error. He made them drink a cup of undiluted wine and brought the one who strikes mightily from the ends of the earth to drunkenness. He judged the war against Jerusalem and its land. With a battering ram, He overthrew strong walls and did not

hinder him. The rulers of the land met him with joy—the angels of God, clearly—and said to him, 'Your way is desirable; come, enter in peace.' They smoothed rough paths before his entrance and opened the gates of Jerusalem. He entered like fire into the house of his sons with peace and set his feet with great safety, for God led him with safety in their error. He destroyed their rulers and every wise counselor. He poured out their blood like unclean water. They defiled Jerusalem and the things sanctified to the name of God, for which the sons of Israel had defiled them before. They profaned the gifts of God with lawless deeds. For these things, He said, 'Cast them far from Me.' He did not give them the beauty of His glory. They were despised before God and dishonored to the end. Their sons and daughters were in cruel captivity, with a seal on their necks," and so on. All these things have happened to us in deed, and justly so. For God had no less cause to be provoked against us and our city than He had against the Jews and their city at that time. Indeed, there is no comparison, nor can any reason be found for the superiority of His cause against us. For to us, the spiritual gifts have been poured out, and the revelations of the divine mysteries. God loved us so much that He gave His only-begotten Son, through whom He made all things, to death for us and for our purification and elevation in His human nature. We rightly believe that this had to happen in this way, and we hold it as demonstrated by the clearest deeds. For though He poured out this gift for all men, not all chose to receive it or were guided to do so. Therefore, what was given for all belongs only to those who have received it, of whom we are the descendants and heirs of the gift. As for bodily visitations, He honored us even more than the Jews, for He deemed our race worthy to rule and reign over all the earth. And when, according to the prophecy of Jesus, Jerusalem was trampled by the nations, it was not long before the glorious things were transferred to this new Jerusalem, the common metropolis of piety, so much more excellent than those of the Jews as the truth surpasses its types. And for this reason, the Christian kingdom, firmly established here first, after those bitter persecutions against the faith by the rulers of the earth, together with the holy authority and under its guidance, spread the Christian faith as from a center, with the best example of divine and civic virtue. Therefore, God justly pronounced the same judgment against us now and exacted the final, incurable penalty after many warnings, stirring up the entire drama against us with a single arrow, from which it was fitting that all should be accomplished. He would have worked the drama of our freedom in the same way and more miraculously if we had not distrusted His works and argued that He was unable to accomplish such things.

6. Therefore, the metropolis had to drink the cup that so many cities in Asia and Europe, its subjects, had drunk before. They drank in such a way, with a strange succession of evils, that either the metropolis, being mutilated late, would gather and they would suffer the fitting penalty by the example of the metropolis, not being conformed to the divine canon. For having greater sin does not excuse those who do not resist the wickedness that drives them to evil in the manner of the many. But the metropolis itself, persisting in worse things to the end, could not but suffer the same as they, and it owed an account for their destruction to both God and nature, since it was a teacher of piety and virtue by God's appointment to those under it. For a considerable time, it was such, but then it grew negligent and became the opposite, both by what it did within itself and by what it sent to them, so that if the power of Jesus had not preserved the rose of piety among the thorns beyond all human hope and means, the name of the true hope of men would have been unknown everywhere in our regions, at least the part that had ruled or held episcopal office in the metropolis for a considerable time. And if this had not been the case, with the barbarians still dwelling beyond the Caucasus

and the Christians in Asia and Europe corrupted by luxury under such examples from us, almost no one would have been led to the heavenly realm, for faith, dry and devoid of the form of love, cannot fly there. Now, however, the progress of many martyrs is a byproduct of the visible calamities among Christians, and the end and work of human existence, as long as it lasts, is for this purpose, and for this reason, the grace of Jesus, shining in the philosophy and virtue of the human spirit tested in tribulations, purifies all. The fruit-bearing of the souls destined for salvation from among the thorns will not cease entirely, for through many tribulations and trials, they must enter the kingdom of God. The greater the scandals of faith and the greater its struggle and wrestling against apostasy, the more steadfast they remain in the love owed to Jesus, and the brighter the crowns prepared for them, until the number of the predestined is completed. At the same time, as the fruit-bearing of human spirits declines due to the excess of wickedness in men, the time of the consummation will come, which is near, as can be inferred from many signs given concerning it. It will not come for non-existence but for the good, with a terrifying purification of all wickedness, coming in this visible world and over all the earth, which the wickedness of men has disfigured, and even more irremediably defiled.

7. No one should doubt that those now suffering among the barbarians for the faith are other Mercuriuses, Procopiuses, and Georges, if not greater than those earlier ones in some respects, as they are braver. For then, they more often went to the tyrants than withstood their attacks. With a doctrine advancing from heaven and with invincible and indisputable assistance, they dared to overthrow the glory of ancient men, grown old in ignorance and wickedness, and with God, they spread the philosophy sown by Jesus throughout the whole world, demonstrating it first in their own bodies after their leader. But the present confessors endure the countless bitter attacks from the barbarians with supernatural endurance, as they are inflicted solely for the name of Jesus. They neither shrink from living with them nor hope for any relief, as far as human judgment can discern, nor are they shaken by the reasonable progress of apostasy, permitted by God, from the love of Jesus. These are surely the effects of the preceding activity according to courage. Concerning what has befallen the metropolis, let this suffice to show in general what we initially set out to do. To go into detail about our wickedness would require another work and not the present time, but rather that time when we must lay aside the divine judgment and transfer it to the God-haters who have unjustly attacked us. And there were, as I have already said, those to whom it was also important to show these things to all and to counsel them to abstain from them and to do what was necessary in this regard. But if someone, while preaching to others, was himself unapproved, and while persuading others to repent, remained unrepentant of his own wickedness and obstinately clung to it, and while most others sinned out of ignorance, he neglected the rational life with greater knowledge, should he have been exempted from the common judgment? And how would that have been reasonable? He ought to have been chastised more than all, bearing the word that justifies and condemns, as the divine word says. Therefore, I was neither snatched away from the common calamities nor did I perish in them, like those who then lost both this life and the sense of the calamities in it.

8. Alas, I have seen—though I remain silent about other matters—that the hope of the wretched remnants of the Greeks has been utterly destroyed in a single city, among a few bodies still trembling with diminished virtues up to that point. Yet the wretched one lived on, nourished by this hope, and as if the Hellenic virtues might one day flourish again through some unexpected change, I endeavored to preserve the

remnants of what is good, partly by my own actions and partly by urging those who were capable of acting. But now, the human condition no longer holds anything venerable for the Greeks, nor will the monuments of our ancestral virtue stand firm or remain somewhere to be recognized and admired. Alas, I have seen the golden statue of piety overturned together with the lifeless beauty of their souls and bodies, and with the entire adornment of their homeland—immediately and by those who should not have done so, or rather by those alone from whom the worst might have been expected, things unbearable even to hear. I speak of what is visible to the many: our piety and honor, exposed to either reverent or shameless disdain in souls, in symbols, in instruments, and in actions. For the statue hidden beneath appearances, visible to those who see sharply, stands unshaken, untouched, shining, illuminating those who approach it, and it will remain until the end, saving those predestined for that life and truly honored by them. Oh, how can I not gasp in anguish, seeing, hearing, and remembering how much scorn has been heaped upon you, the most beautiful of divine works, by the godless? I was compelled to endure the insults of the genuine and the long-standing yawns of the sons toward your foreign beauty. Some of us endured by flattering the sons, while others delighted in those who flattered, or by base flatteries made the shameless even more brazen, providing them with excuses rooted in the filth of the earth. Therefore, you threatened us, as your type threatened the Jews, that barbarian hands would be unleashed against you, so that we might be cut down, cast down, and dragged through your sufferings, grieved and oppressed by the sensation of pains, while you rejoiced, as you threatened, over our evils—evils for which we once reveled while you grieved over us and our follies. Let us consider this briefly: have not many of the captives now forgotten your beauty and love? But even before, under the pretense of honor, there was nothing disgraceful to you that we did not dare to do, and while blessing with our lips, we turned our hearts as far as possible from your love, as you yourself proclaimed the true love defined from heaven. We traded you recklessly for metals, making the most precious one a commodity. With unclean hands and impure souls, we entrusted your purity. If anyone offered us something temporal and earthly in your place, it immediately became your substitute, for it was impossible to enjoy both equally. We endured in silence the blasphemies against you, while we ourselves blasphemed even worse. If the drunkenness of these outrageous ones prevails, it is not so much the great insult from the worst enemies that grieves the insulted, but rather the dishonor from those who are genuine and owe gratitude, even if they fall short in quantity. Before the walls were torn down, we lost your vigilant protection, which had been our sole security in earlier times. Before our possessions were plundered, we were despoiled when, leaping unrestrainedly upon your treasures—or rather, your limbs, to speak more fittingly—we gave some as pledges to those for whom it was unholy, and others we handed over to the smelters, not only under the pretext of freedom but also for each one's personal pleasures, while we avoided the treasures at home as if they were more inviolable. And while daring such things against you, we hoped to be saved through you. And now we reproach you as if you could not even save yourself. These are the deeds of the crucifiers, whose measure we have filled. If I am torn apart and seek to release my soul, hearing daily and everywhere that the most honorable portion of Jesus' inheritance is being betrayed to Satan—some by necessity, others by choice—how am I not filled with shame, realizing that even after abandoning God, we were punished, and after being punished, we omit nothing of impiety? Alone among the people of the earth, we have been cast down not by the turns of fortune but by the shamelessness against the hope of our salvation, and we testify to the justice of the one who cast us down, having become no better even after the discipline. And if being led away with those who enslaved us

offers no veil to those suffering such horrors in the perfection of their understanding, how shall we cover the revival of Hellenic polytheism, which even before the disasters of the metropolis restored the worship of names from yesterday and the day before, or this error, which neither can be persuaded by reason nor finds such reason, nor is compelled by any necessity? With what color shall we conceal this from those who reproach us, whether they are Christians or barbarians and strangers?

9. Truly, your judgments are righteous, O Lord, and they hold the highest justice. For we have been humbled under the feet of our enemies unwillingly, since we refused to humble ourselves under your laws. The walls of our inner security were torn down from without, and the most shameful slavery of our passions was followed by the slavery of those who plotted against us from outside. Now we recognize your power, having made vain our human hopes. Now we perceive the shame of our faces as in a mirror, reflected in the disasters through which we have been disciplined. It is not the faith of Christ that has grown weak, but we who have grown weak and been destroyed, having trampled upon Him and treated the blood of the covenant as common. The man who became for us, and the eternal Word and God who gloriously accomplished that most exalted humiliation, has left us exposed to human plots, unable to bear our ingratitude and audacity. It is not your paternal love for us that has grown cold, but the smoke of our sins has stopped up the spring of your compassion for us, and the full weight of justice has turned against us. You who once exalted us with many and countless gifts have now humbled us most pitifully. We confess that we have been justly humbled; we give thanks that we have been humbled in this way, for you have not destroyed us utterly by flood or fire, as a clear sign of eternal destruction, but you have given us this life of pain as an opportunity for correction, for those who choose it, and you exact the penalty due to our follies in small and brief afflictions, opening to us through the philosophy of repentance the way to true, pure, and lasting rest. And after the fulfillment of your inexorable and sovereign justice, you release from your paternal compassion an abundant and overflowing spring of mercy, delivering some completely, mixing relief with afflictions for others, and preparing still others with the greater gift of endurance for the life to come, which is near and draws the souls of those predestined for it. Nor have you done less for those who have been slain, O greatest and wisest provider. For some, while the beloved homeland was still being saved, departed rejoicing in the consciousness of a pious death. Others, immediately after the sensation of the horror, either in despair of a fortunate life or with courage of soul and zeal against the enemies, willingly embraced death or endured it unwillingly, and were freed from the immediate sharpness of the sensation of both common and personal disasters and the death that followed. Still others, having lived a little longer, suffered the same kinds of evils as those who struggle even now, drinking almost the full cup of your judgment, and found relief from further torment at the hands of evil men. Concerning all these, we are led by the same hope that their end has been wisely arranged by your good providence, either by the deprivation of life, which is sweet even in evils for many, or by the punishment of those who, having governed the homeland poorly, became the cause of these disasters for others, or by the punishment of their own sins for those who did not participate in public affairs, or by being snatched immediately from the furnace of trials, either because they would not have grown weary in the multitude of temptations due to faint-heartedness or because they did not need a lengthy purification. For all alike, as for the former, who died for such things, so for the latter, who were killed by such things, we hope that their end has been rewarded by your love for mankind, for as many as received the sacred judgment with thanksgiving and repentance for the evils they once dared to commit. Therefore, gathering all things together,

we confess our gratitude to you, O sweetest and eternal Father and provider, for what you have shown to our fathers, for what you have now given to us, for what you have done well, for what you have taught, for what you have exalted, for what you have humbled, for what you have judged for those who have departed, and for what you still judge for the living. For if we are to have you, we have lost nothing; if we are to live eternally in you, we have suffered or are suffering nothing terrible; if we are to attain the true homeland, the sufferings of our exile will not grieve us, as long as we remain sober-minded. Therefore, even if we have been justly deprived of all things, may we not be deprived of you. Whether we are to be tested to the end in the waves of temptation or whether something desirable is to happen by your wonder-working wisdom, it is your concern.

10. These are the things I had to see while still alive, O my remaining friends, wherever you may be on earth. These things keep the memory of sins burning incessantly in my heart like an unquenchable flame, not seated elsewhere but fixed firmly at the source and reminders of all evils. Not only my body but also my mind has been enslaved, and I cannot bear to dwell with those who insult the saints, whom the divine judgment has somehow gathered here from every place and rank—a thing both unbelievable in appearance and impossible to comprehend. Nor can I withdraw, even if it were entirely permitted, nor is it entirely permitted. I cannot live (for how is it possible for a man to live who cannot use his mind except to philosophize in evils?), nor can I seem to live with such great pains, nor can I die, either by deserving it, or by being allowed it, or by daring it, even if I greatly desire it, nor do I desire it, being restrained by the laws concerning these matters. And so I have been deprived of these common misfortunes. But as for how I came to the rank of bishop, I will not say what I suffered or how I was forced, whether by the hands or by words far more violent in power and touching the depths of my conscience. For I dare not speak against the force that compelled me or the sequence of events that followed, since no one has authority over anything unless it is given from above. Where, then, shall one who loves me place me among these misfortunes, knowing my circumstances well and dispassionately observing the external unpleasantness accompanying the matter, speaking as a man? How shall I lament? What cry shall I utter that befits this suffering, I who know the weakness of my soul, or how shall I conceal it from my friends? What have I in common with the works of the zealots, having never seen, learned, or aimed at such things, nor having the preparation of bodily purity, nor the inclination of soul toward them? No one has bound me with the chains of these outrageous barbarians, nor insulted me, nor struck me with a foot, nor allowed me to go hungry, nor deprived me of the use of my feet for walking, nor commanded me to serve in any way, nor permitted me to serve when I had advanced, for I would have willingly endured these things and not been grieved, even if they were beyond my strength. Indeed, I prayed to suffer all these things, not yet knowing the future burden. For I knew that I needed much purification and that through the bitterness of such trials, I would shake off the guilt of my sins by divine mercy.

But instead of these things, what happened to me? Many others were delivered daily, rescued by those who did not even know how to call upon them before. But I was a useless burden in the hands of the conquerors. Once I asked my friends, but when they refused, I entrusted everything to God. They did not ransom me for a moderate sum, as if I might somehow lament the common misfortunes along with my sins, but they revealed me to this master, crying out that he was the one who should oversee our souls, exalting him to the heavens with praises—him whom they should have concealed to save, if they truly knew him to be such, and not enclosed him in so many labyrinths. And I was immediately seized from a greater distance. I

entered the city more wretchedly than when I left it, brought by the master himself, and I was commanded to rule a desert monastery, trampled by all, and to become a liberator of the monks who would join me, without resources—monks who had previously filled everything with vice and turmoil, and now, making the Christian misfortunes a pretext for greed and the fulfillment of desires, they dishonored the sacred order and filled the souls of those who saw them with scandal and every evil, spreading it throughout the world. To me, they seemed even more burdensome than the barbarians, until I was delivered from slavery and deemed worthy of all goodwill and honor from them, pretending to practice other virtues and what they only know how to call submission, while in practice exercising the opposite, then eagerly turning to the captivity of human souls. Then I was forced to build and raise up churches overturned and gathered with those Christians who should not have been there, perhaps not even caring how they would live according to the ancestral law and worship God, as much as it was fitting to provide for. Then came a synod of many bishops, some from Asia, others from Europe, and by votes I was first made a deacon, then a priest, then a bishop and patriarch. I omit what happened in between, accomplished according to the laws concerning these matters, and before these, my objections, tears, and the waste of time—or rather, passing over everything, I speak of what followed my consecration. I remain silent about the lack of instruments fitting for each need, nor do I now mention the compulsion and violence, nor the desolation of those who shared the burden of ecclesiastical leadership according to the laws, nor the labors to resolve those destructive scandals and divisions, which immediately brought us many difficulties, requiring us to respond well, not only according to the canon but also removing other dangers from the bishops or all together. Nor do I speak of the abuses from men who seemed to desire our leadership, then caused me much trouble. Nor do I mention the darkness and gloom from cares, for we were unaccustomed to such anxieties from birth, God having given us a will that flees from them and a power from external sources sufficiently or even abundantly serving the will, until with the change of form we dissolved all needs, so that everything then conspired toward our private affairs. I omit the sufferings of my fellow countrymen and sons who fled to our compassion, over which we grieved most, being neither unsympathetic by nature nor having the power to help and share their burdens. I pass over the desire for tranquility, for which we burned with longing, the cliffs accompanying this leadership, if one did not pay close attention, the desire to have nothing in common with any of the living, neither before nor now, especially in such a storm of consciences, the excess of divinity in those entrusted to us and our utter unworthiness for these things, the lack of allies for every need, and yet, by the grace of God, making the distribution of ecclesiastical matters unsummoned, unaffected, and entirely pure, or the greatest income of money under our care, disposing of everything shamefully. But the necessity of either allowing almost everyone to live contrary to the laws and thus defiling my own soul or attempting to correct them and seeming to send them into the abyss of perdition, which they choose instead of paternal healing—both laymen and monks and those honored with episcopal names—either deserting to the alien faith or threatening to desert, fills me with bitterness, as I cannot bear even a flea's sting, nor bear the burden of my own sins, desiring tranquility, needing nothing from the bean, nor promising to need anything, even if God cooperates to preserve and will preserve, thirsting for help.

11. Therefore, God has driven us not into those difficulties which we would have borne with pleasure, partly through philosophy, partly through reverence for Him who judges thus, since nothing would have deterred us from our resolve about life, but into this stadium, where even those who wish to philosophize are

not permitted, and where tears and groans must be our food and drink, our sleep and the visions in it, and everything said, heard, and done. God alone knows the exact truth; I, attempting to understand from what I know of myself, find the causes of these things. For having fled the life among many and the toil in kingdoms rather than that freedom, and not having fled the city and its snares, by which the goal of repentance was necessarily hindered, and not enduring to proceed to the monastery nor having anything in common with any of the city's affairs, but receiving the crowd flowing into the chamber daily under the not unworthy pretext of serving the word, though they were not much persuaded, and I, even while vexed, still nourished some ambition of soul, when I should have shut the chamber and chosen rather to grieve my friends than to see my soul captive away from God and the most sacred communion—these things have been the cause of such cares being left in me, nor do I have any way to enjoy the desired leisure. That, being compelled by all alike and not seeing that they play in matters not playful, I entangled myself in ecclesiastical affairs, when I should have sat in silence, hiding the pearl in my bosom, which, when trampled, they often rushed to tear us, the givers, apart, especially since I, both by choice and by form, was not then inclined to contend about such things or to stand with those who contended. But out of gratitude, I carried this meddling further, because I hoped, being present, to benefit the homeland in some way, and withdrawing somewhere, to seem to those who easily judge others' affairs to have betrayed the matter, as if we stood unwillingly, to have betrayed those present and standing with us, and to have deprived the homeland of the other benefit of the word in the coming dangers. And for this reason, not far from those tumults and dangers, I strove to be and to seek my own salvation as a priority, though the king restrained me with anger, having despaired of persuading me, and his counselors, though unwilling, often held me back when I was eager to withdraw. But I should have departed secretly; for this reason, God, not approving that business, as it seems, burdened us with the same tasks, educating us not in the same condition but with many weaknesses, more reproaches and dishonors, and for what we then willingly agreed, now justly judged us to serve unwillingly, by force, with pain and much bitterness, and not even having any way to be delivered, nor expecting any reward from what we accomplished for the faith and the salvation of souls, because of the compulsion of the mind. These, then, are our affairs in brief, and we bring such a judgment against ourselves, God alone knowing the truth about what is decreed.

12. We were ignorant then of what was necessary, having filled our soul with ignorance and darkness for a long time because we had granted much to this wicked and gloomy evil, contrary to reason and law, with which we were bound, and it was necessary for our blinded soul not to be able to find what was necessary, for the works must correspond to the habits, and the tree is known by its fruit, as Scripture says. But what many think and say, that what happened is some ineffable and supernatural miracle of the superior, connecting the benefits from it, and whatever pitiable things might have happened after the destructive disaster, the Church not being established so paradoxically and according to the laws and having precise justification in the souls of men, not in this wretched place (for this is almost nothing or only a subject of misfortunes), but in this entire region, and whatever else of benefit happened in a short time, once we were driven into such inescapable necessity by God, these things I also affirm and consider those who dared in such sharpness to ask not for the dead Jesus, as Joseph then did, but rather to ask for Him alive, proclaiming and persuading openly His own divinity and glory among the crucifiers—for this was to seek one who would do on earth what He inspires from heaven—and to move those who sought from God, and those who gave willingly to

be tyrannized from there—this I know well, so that I have often and in many ways testified in writing and speech that to those who give thanks to men and embrace the benefit from the Church, God's providence will preserve this gift and add others, for He is able to do all things; but to those who are ungrateful, having shown the grace only (for thus He is accustomed), He will take it back immediately. But although these things are so, I do not fail to recognize that God can work these miracles for the salvation of the chastened children, if they wish, and give me the desire, if He willed. He would will it, if I were worthy. But by one thing now, He has exacted from many the benefit, which they call perhaps even pleasure, as in such great evils He accomplished; but from me, He has exacted the due penalty, for which throughout my life I provoked the divine Spirit.

13. Glory and thanks, therefore, be to the Physician of human souls, for He has mixed such medicines for us, through which we were to be embittered and remember the follies of our past life and moderate our pride in some way. Instead of the haughty mindset, which the words of the wise define as the beginning of every sin and the response to every judgment, He has prepared such remedies for us. For perhaps, if we had then clung to freedom, we would have made tranquility and leisure a pretext for arrogance and vanity. But now, the very inability to heal our minds, and the inability to show others how much we have been compelled, except to those who know each detail closely, has been arranged by God, as it seems, for the humbling of our pride, which had often been inflated disorderly. For it is not this master of ours, nor those who handed me over to him in zeal for the faith, nor the necessity of ecclesiastical leadership, nor the reasoning that persuaded me when I was unwilling, nor anything else of this kind that has brought this bitterness into our stadium. Rather, it is the weight of our sins and the mercy of God toward us, which sometimes requires harsher remedies and at other times permits these, not abandoning even the incurable. For thus the compassion of the Lord toward sinners persuades us to take courage, even if we turn in some way, so that if we did not fear the spiritual dangers accompanying the matter, known more clearly by experience and the unbearable turmoil arising in the soul, we might have endured such purification, having once fallen into it. But now, with such dangers surrounding us on all sides, since wickedness has so increased among men, according to the prophecy of Jesus and His disciples, that they not only do not wish to be helped by us but even repay our zeal for them with slander and deceit, by which they plot even against this wretched life, which we do not greatly strive for, we must not be overly grieved by this. But since we cannot help them and risk being harmed eternally, we turn away. For this reason, we have decided to withdraw to our private life, considering the contemplation of our own sins desirable, if by repentance for our former evils we might bring ourselves to the desired end alone, even if we do not succeed in escaping and living for some time. For to choose this and to die having chosen it will suffice for our pleasure. For among our other evils, this also seems like a riddle: that the freedom which those responsible for our drama secured for us by writings, without my seeking or even mentioning it, but rather wishing to avoid the charge of not pleasing the laws of Christians by becoming a bishop of slaves, was entirely annulled by the master's decision, not allowing us to depart anywhere or to live privately, not from his own will, to tell the truth, but yielding to the cries of the Christians, who thought they would gain something from our bitterness.

14. There are those who slander our purpose, each contributing or fabricating something. How, then, shall we willingly destroy the law of God and stand in the freedom of the sacred, not only with a compelled mind but also with an enslaved body? For we would not have endured it at all unless freedom had first been

granted to the body both in writing and in deed. Now it seems to be hypocrisy and a stage play, with so many advising us to decline. And the sickness is beyond all; it almost escaped us in our speech. For we have often been in danger of falling into despair in the more critical moments of sacred works, and if we had not decided thus in advance, we might have lost our minds. For scarcely would anyone, even if made of stone, be insensible to such a tragedy, or make the unfortunate throne a pretext for vanity. But we do not withdraw from the judgment that God has appointed for us. Rather, knowing that God does not always chastise the same ones, but chastises those He loves, as He Himself says, He loves even more when He sees them bearing the chastisement and repenting for what they were chastised, and thus fulfills their pious desires, which lead to true life and its attainment. And we can use many signs that God now advises us to live a life of repentance alone. Nor would we make it a sign of God's chastisement if someone forcibly removed us from this present life. For perhaps even this failure to do what is necessary, being involuntary and moved by a sound purpose, the compassionate One will resolve in the manner of our end. But rather, we consider this a good providence. For us, life would only be desirable if we could benefit our fellow countrymen. But if by meddling we will not help them, and by shepherding we will harm them greatly, the addition of days will be a great burden to us. We desire only to live long enough, with the grace of God working in us, to be purified and depart with better hopes. If God accomplishes this purification and expectation in a shorter way, how shall we not receive this benefit with joy? For we did not previously accept the leadership out of fear of death, but unwillingly, out of a greater, more pious, and wiser fear, and with hopes of better things, to which we, with God, assign this life. And now, not without right and sound reasoning, along with hope in God, we have secured peace for our soul. We consider nothing unpleasant or hopeless that may befall us, as God judges, whether we foresee it or not. For not only do we desire to be purified in this way, but also to die as transgressors of divine laws and what we long ago established for ourselves. And now, after such a long time, having endured the liturgy, we will depart gladly, not concerning ourselves with this temporal life. For we have one fear: lest we be ashamed of ourselves, enduring for a long time what seems no longer bearable. But we have no fear of death. We do not so greatly desire to remain with this clay, which shames us by its presence, as long as we grant it more than it deserves. Nor have we wasted our life in vain with doctrines and sacred words. Nor can we be in its presence without weeping continually, unable to bear the evils of our kinsmen and fellow countrymen, and especially the terrible corruption in their souls, which only God can heal.

15. Therefore, I advise all of you, my former friends, as many as now deem it worthy to be such, if they command us to depart from this pirate ship, not to grieve, since we depart with some virtue and with God's choice of the better, if it is not possible to choose it while living. But if we must still live, let us rejoice in this also, as something good, since it will be from God. As for the faith and the holy Church, we must beseech the Almighty to act, and each of us must not neglect to do what we can for them. Reflecting on what has happened to the homeland, which we have briefly explained, and knowing these things to be most true, take the same disposition as we have. For this alone would be true and fitting for the pious and beneficial. As many of you as live among Christians, preserved from what we suffer and what we expect, give the greatest thanks to God for this, and grieve with us, with whom these terrible things have been shared, and perhaps they will remain with us until the end. As for what is personally mine, I neither make much of it nor believe it will last long. But the destruction of our race, through the succession of evils, I lament even while living, and if it were possible, I would lament it even from the grave. Yet I will marvel at the providence that has

arranged these things thus, and I will glorify and sing of it everywhere and forever. In all things, I advise you, if there are any who recount our deeds for criticism—and there are very many—do not resist them. For what they say is often very true. For what have we been to the life of men, or even to ourselves? Rather, what kind of man would not be fit to criticize the way we have lived privately and conducted ourselves publicly? Therefore, we must yield to them and not argue. For perhaps something better will come to us from God for this, as they pay some penalty here in the human court for their wickedness. But if they seem to you not to speak the truth, consider it sufficient revenge that they do not speak the truth, and pray that the truth may be revealed to them by God. And I pray this for you as well.

RESIGNATION FROM PATRIARCHAL OFFICE

VI. Pastoral Letter: Gennadius Announces His Forthcoming Resignation from the Patriarchal Office (1455-1456).

† The humble monk Gennadius, by the mercy of God Patriarch of Constantinople, to all the poor of Christ who will read this present letter, grants a blessing from the fountain of God's blessings and knowledge of our affairs, so that through the prayers and zeal of all, the matters of the Church, with Christ Himself nodding in approval, may be provided for by our compassion.

1. "If my people had heeded me," it is said, "if Israel had walked in my ways, I would have humbled their enemies, and I would have laid my hand upon their foes. But now I will visit their iniquities with a rod and with stripes." Therefore, no one enlightened by God should be ignorant that because of our sins, the heavenly and inexorable judgment of God has severely chastised and continues to chastise our nation, which persists in sin and lawlessness without repentance. In another letter previously sent everywhere for the instruction of our people concerning what has happened to our race, both in the past and now finally to the metropolis, or rather, what must necessarily follow such as we are, we have addressed the correction of the uneducated and lawless conduct of the majority. There, we briefly but sufficiently explained everything, as far as possible. This weighs heavily on my soul, which daily grows more sorrowful as it perceives and understands the reasons for the great indignation of our compassionate Creator and Provider against us. I am reasonably afraid that until the end of this age, the inexorable and most just judgment from heaven will not cease to pursue even the remnants of our people, manifesting itself in every change of times and circumstances according to the inscrutable governance of the Lord in this part of the earth, so that our shamelessness and wickedness are found punished everywhere, unless we begin at last to correct ourselves and cease from such numerous and great transgressions. Therefore, during this brief but painful period of involuntary shepherding, we have striven, as far as possible, with steadfast hope in the Lord, who grants strength to our weakness, to turn the hearts of our children to the love of His salvation, which they cannot otherwise find, possess, or firmly hope for, unless they keep the golden laws of the Gospel and the ordinances of the holy Mother Church and the established laws of the most pious Christian polity, with the help of God, and lead a life in accordance with reason. But these things cannot be accomplished and achieved unless through reverent submission and adherence to the Church and its leader, and by willing and striving to fulfill what he commands and advises, and in general by clinging to the earthly father and mediator because of our reference to the heavenly Father and Savior and common Master. But although we have striven greatly in a short time and made this striving our sleep, food, and drink, we have been able to bear little fruit. As the divine Paul says, because of the disobedience of the children, we have spent the whole year not rejoicing but groaning, watching over the salvation of the sons given to us, because we do not see in them the fruit worthy of our labors.

2. Since, therefore, as the divine Paul adds, it is unprofitable for the children when the fathers groan, when they do not have the gratitude of the children they shepherd for their watchfulness (for God must punish ingratitude), we, not wishing to groan unprofitably and harmfully over the disobedience of the children, cease. For we fear lest by our opposition they become worse. Moreover, we, the humble, do not have such confidence in ourselves, nor the greatness of mind that the blessed Paul had, who received the

exhortation to the ministry directly from the Lord, so that even while being indignant and groaning over the disobedience of the children, he nevertheless persevered because of the progress of the preaching beyond all human hope from heaven. Nor is it given to us by men and prevailing custom the same freedom to go about and supply the deficiencies of writings or of guardians by direct teaching and the healing of words through more precise supervision, as the heavenly Bishop of the world had, both from his own mind and from the command of the Lord, with no one compelling him to be fixed in one place with so many difficulties and from there to attempt to benefit the world, while now they pursue and compel us to move about. Therefore, since the hope of benefiting many does not meet us, we choose rather to examine our own evils with moderation and attempt to heal them, or to be relieved of the burden with the mercy of the Lord. And we suspect what is reasonable to suspect in such times and such fortunes. But whatever may follow, we do what appears necessary, ready to accept it as something that will not be accomplished without divine providence. For we are all by nature subject to death, and it must come upon us at some time, whether we do good, evil, or nothing at all. And we especially thirst for deliverance from this pirate ship, not only now in such a condition of what we suffer and share in suffering, but also before, since the philosophy given by God opened our eyes in some way and made known to us the condition of us men, what it is now and what it will be when we are released from the toil in the body and in this life, whenever God commands. Nor would we be little pleased if such a thing should come upon us from here, we who have long considered our life a burden and a misfortune, and perhaps justly. For what have we been to the life of men, we who have not been able to benefit even ourselves, but have harmed many by our negligence and provoked our heavenly Benefactor with countless transgressions. Therefore, having written to those who can relieve us of this burden with God, we have made it known that it is no longer bearable for us, and they must take care of the remainder as far as they can. For our part will soon come to an end. Two months have already passed, and we have given them the present day as a deadline. But at their advice, we willingly leap over the deadline. For they say it makes no difference to do the same thing after a second month with greater security for the common good, and they speak well. Today is the beginning of the tenth month. If not sooner, then the day of enlightenment, which gave the high priesthood last year, expected soon in the cycle of one year, will see us as private individuals and in the form of humility, from which we have not been excluded even in title, since now, except for the name, the rest of the form has been overlooked by those who have appointed us as overseers. †

TO SOPHROSYNĒ

VII. Letter to Sophrosynē, Sister of the Empress. Gennadius Sends Her His Work: On the First Service of God.

† To the most noble in God and most honorable lady, my sister of the most exalted Empress, Lady Sophrosynē, the most holy and reverend among nuns.

1. Most noble, most glorious, and most honorable soul, now truly beloved by God, we have received the writings of your holiness and read them with great spiritual joy and divine exultation, and we have thanked God from the depths of our heart, who has guided you to the harbor of Christ-loving philosophy. Before being entangled in the storms and disturbances of the life of the multitude, you truly chose the most excellent path with sobriety and pure knowledge. You have cast aside all the vanity of women attached to worldly life. You have been wedded to the true Bridegroom, Christ. Blessed and thrice blessed is your choice, a blessed shoot of your renowned parents. May the Lord prosper your zeal. May the Lord be your guide to the goal set before you, your counselor, comforter, and advocate. I send you the evangelical law, which you will find nowhere else in any book. Read it and keep it in the appropriate places, for it contains things fitting only for men. But noting what is proper for you, keep and guard it. Read also the ascetic sayings of the divine Basil, for they are the monastic rule. There you will learn about all that is sought. If it were possible for us to be near the place where you are, perhaps we would have assisted your godly zeal with a living voice. But neither do we have a place there now, nor are you here. Let the treatise of Basil suffice you, and this which I now send you concerning the first service of God.

2. Concerning the second service, I will tell you briefly: Do not strive for fasting in the sense of abstaining from food or drink, but in the sense of self-control. Self-control, to put it briefly, is this: First, to eat once a day in winter; if possible, throughout the whole year. Second, not to eat costly foods but inexpensive and easily obtained ones. Third, not to eat to satiety. Fourth, not to eat with pleasure. Fifth, not to eat with hypocrisy. Sixth, not to neglect the love owed to God or to one's neighbor because of the preparation of food. Above all, aim at bodily health and the strength of the body, and do not make it disorderly or sluggish by excess of food and drink, nor weak and feeble by lack. Do not neglect the church assembly, but in your cell consume the hours with manual labor and prayer. Let this be your prayer: "My God, have mercy on me, a sinner, and save me." Say this as one prayer, and return to it again, whether sitting, standing, or working with your hands. Let your tongue pour forth this prayer, and let your mind agree with your tongue without distraction. Make prostrations according to your strength, and do not follow a fixed number, but according to what your strength allows at each time. If you cannot pray standing, pray sitting. If you cannot pray intensely and continuously, take a short break and then return to prayer. Through patience, humility, gentleness, thanksgiving, love for the life to come, confession to God, and disregard for all temporal things and voluntary forgetfulness, offer yourself daily as a sacrifice to God, to whom be glory forever, amen.

3. But pray that we may not be tempted beyond our strength. The merciful God, in His mercy, has delivered us unexpectedly from a great illness, and now we are well through your prayers. Yet this mercy of the Lord is not without reason. For what need is there for our life in such times and among such people? But that we may be corrected and repent. And yet we neglect our salvation as before. But pray for us. We have written nothing to your honorableness because of the past difficulties of the times. Do not labor further

about sacred things over such a distance. It is enough that you consecrate yourself daily to God. Strive for this through your manual labor. If you wish, and if you have the time and ability, give alms and feed yourself in part. The Lord be with you, and your prayer with us.

† The servant of the children of God, Gennadius.

FIRST SERVICE OF GOD

VIII. On the First Service of God (1458).

† Concerning the First Service of God, or the Evangelical Law in Summary. Written spontaneously and simply for a certain monastic friend who requested it.

Prologue.

† There are two kinds of worship and service to God for the pious: the first and primary kind, which consists in keeping His commandments with fear and love (for we ought to love Him as Creator, Father, Provider, and Benefactor of this age and the age to come, and to fear Him as Master and eternal Judge); and the second and lesser kind, which consists in prostrations, prayers, psalmody, and similar acts. Concerning the first and most necessary service of God, we will speak first in summary and clarity, following the divine words on the mountain of the Lord, which constitute the evangelical and spiritual law. This law is called spiritual because it transcends all legal observances, whether those following the natural law or the written law given through Moses. For those observances brought man to God through certain sensory and bodily means, but this law directly brings the human mind and will into submission to God Himself. For God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. Those observances derived their efficacy not from themselves but from the submission of those who kept them. But the law of the Lord Jesus derives its efficacy both from submission and from the nature of the law itself and the power of God who gave it, who legislated for human nature through Himself and spoke in the assumed man, fulfilling in deed and example the only path to future blessedness, and thus perfectly accomplishing in due time the care for the improvement and salvation of mankind, which He had previously demonstrated in various ways through the natural law and the written law over a long period. To Him be glory forever.

1. Faith. First, therefore, you must believe without doubt and rightly, for faith is the foundation of the spiritual edifice of man in this life, in which we walk by faith and not by direct vision. Neither our mind can be built up in truth nor our will in goodness unless it is founded on faith. Faith is composed of three parts in its structure and composition. First, you must believe that God exists. Second, you must believe in Him, as He has commanded to be believed, that is, in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, not multiplied in names alone without real distinction, nor divided into three substances, but distinguished in one supreme nature by personal or hypostatic characteristics. "Believe in God," He says, "and believe in Me, for as the Son and offspring of God, I have come forth from the Father and am distinct; but as having become man for you men, I have come to you; and according to the nature of divinity, I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or rather, I and the Father are one. And the Holy Spirit proceeds from God and the Father," He says, "and is Mine, for He is the Spirit of truth, and I am the truth; and therefore He will guide you into all truth." Hence, the symbol of our faith, through which we are reborn, namely baptism, and through which we become pilgrims of the eternal life closed to us because of ancestral sin, is required and received under the confession of one divinity in three persons. And in general, we must believe in God in this way; specifically, according to the development of the Church, which, under the governance of God from apostolic times until now and until the end, quenches the thirst of the lovers of learning concerning the mysteries of faith. For to this Church, as possessing divine power from God, the ordinance of the Lord entrusts not only the more hidden

and lofty matters but also those pertaining to morals. Therefore, we are finally permitted to resolve disputes among brothers and commanded to avoid those who disobey the Church as pagans and tax collectors and to separate and excommunicate them. For God is in the midst of the Church, according to His promise, when it gathers in His name with humility and all divine preparation, seeking illumination from Him. Hence, by following the Church in such matters, we directly follow God, and we have nothing in common with those who oppose it, considering them sacrilegious, defiled, and hateful to God. Third, you must believe in God concerning all that He promises about blessed life and all that He threatens concerning punishments. For He is faithful as God and without falsehood, and He brings great testimony of truth from His works, as He Himself deems necessary, so that if for no other reason, at least because of His works, we should believe in Him—both those things that occur in the course of nature not without Him and those things that He works beyond the order of nature. The end and fruit of all these is the perfection of mankind toward the hoped-for communion of the good, administered through His all-encompassing providence for them here. But many men, through willful wickedness and ignorance, have used nature and its works for false opinions and evil, and have repaid the supernatural works of divine wonder with ingratitude instead of thanksgiving. Thus, faith being composed of these three parts, you must first, as has been said, lay faith as a foundation, for without it, it is impossible to please God. For faith will not only be profitable for your whole life, having the principle of a beginning, but it will also become your teacher of divine wills, sometimes unfolding what is contained in the divine laws, sometimes adding to them, because the mind of the believer, sincerely and firmly, is aided by the God in whom he believes, who supplies the deficiency of human reason and mind with the light of grace when, having been humbled, he believes, and having believed, he works out his faith through deeds. Therefore, we now, by faith and with His help, pave the way for you to the rest of God's law. Thus, your mind will be joined to the first truth in the second part of faith as far as possible here; your will will be guided toward the choice of good in the first part; and your reasoning will be comforted in the labors for virtue and the assaults of temptations, whether brought by God, or through demons, or through men, or by nature, with God permitting or not preventing, for the sake of testing or purification. And either through endurance you will gain until the end, or by fleeing to God, you will be delivered, with God rewarding your faith, who said to the Canaanite woman, "Great is your faith; let it be done for you as you desire," and to the disciples, "If you have faith, nothing will be impossible for you."

2. The End of Human Life. Next, know that the end of human existence and life and its happiness consist in nothing other than the perfection of the mind. The mind is perfected both naturally and supernaturally after separation from the body, being united to the first truth and the ultimate good, which are both God Himself. For this, He says, is the blessedness of man and eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent, that is, the mysteries of theology and economy, of which the former pertains to the truth of the divine essence, and the latter to the surpassing goodness and love for mankind of the divine nature. Therefore, if attaining that happiness comes to us by the grace of God (for without Him we can do nothing), yet our free will and effort are also required, so that we may attain that supernatural end not only freely but also by some justification.

3. The Omnipresence and Providence of God. Next, know and believe without doubt that God is everywhere by essence, for His essence is infinite; and by presence, for His knowledge is infinite; and by power, for His power is likewise infinite and boundless. And because He is most good, most wise, and

almighty, He provides for all that He has created according to the nature and order of each thing in the universe, even to the point of causing the plants of the field to live and be clothed in various colors at His command, and not a single sparrow falls into a snare without His divine will. But He provides especially for mankind, for even the hairs of their head are numbered by Him. And so that His goodness and justice may work together in us, He watches over our deeds and marks them carefully. He sees us standing, sitting, sleeping, and praying; He sees us in solitude and in gatherings, speaking and silent; He knows well the innermost thoughts of our mind and the unformed intentions within us. Therefore, He rejoices when He sees us thinking, speaking, and doing what agrees with His word and His laws; but He is grieved by the opposite, not because He is harmed or gains anything—for He is self-sufficient and impassible—but because through keeping His laws, we become worthy of His love and the blessedness He has prepared for us, or through transgressing them, we prepare for ourselves rejection and eternal punishment, and instead of the good Father and Master, we join ourselves to the enemy of our salvation and his efforts against us. Know that for those who seek God, He is not only a rewarder in the future but also a helper in this life, a defender, a counselor concerning what must be done. He does not completely deliver us from the afflictions connected with this life, for it is necessary to enter that heavenly consolation through afflictions. But He mixes relief with afflictions and proportions the afflictions to our strength, and as long as He wills, He does not allow even a hair of our head to perish, and even if we drink poison, we are not harmed, especially if we are soldiers for Him, disregarding this temporal life out of love for the truth. Likewise, He punishes those who transgress His commandments without repentance, both in the future and in this life. For if He sometimes allows some of the wicked to prosper here, it is for the sake of common benefits, and He increases their punishment because they can no longer benefit from afflictions, having become hardened by excessive indulgence. Therefore, fear God in all your thoughts, words, deeds, and conduct, for the fear of the Lord is pure, as it is written, and the Lord glorifies those who fear Him, and there is no lack for those who fear Him. And let nothing in the world be fearful to you except God alone, and do not fear those who kill the body, for they cannot kill the soul. But fear Him who can cast the soul into the fire of Gehenna as an eternal and just Judge. He casts them there because those who are dead in sins leading to death cannot ascend to the heavenly life, not because He wills them to be cast there or to die, but because they themselves have chosen to remain in the impassable state of ascent to heavenly blessedness. Therefore, you must fear not so much God as offending Him, and tremble at the eternal law of God, which wisely and justly excludes from the same life those who have not lived in the same way. Therefore, even if you are handed over to the rulers of the earth for the sake of the divine law, do not hesitate, do not shrink back, but strengthened by the fear of Him who was born and came for this purpose, to bear witness to the truth and for this reason was denied in the universal theater by those who do not likewise confess the truth about Him before men but deny Him out of love for life, answer with noble courage, and do not worry about how or what you will say, for it will be given to you by God immediately, and the Spirit of God will speak in you. Therefore, await His inspiration with humility, and the Almighty will not overlook the champion of the truth.

4. Love for God. Love God above all things, for He is the ultimate goal, because all the pleasures of this world are perishable and dissolve like shadows or dreams. Either they leave us when they end, having such a nature, or we leave them when we are taken away. But God alone remains, and we, that is, our souls, remain. Therefore, after God, we ought to love ourselves above all the world. "For what will it profit a man if he

gains the whole world but loses his soul?" Or what will he give in exchange for himself from the pleasures of the world, in which he delights here, when he reaps the consequences of the wickedness and negligence of this life there? After our soul, each of us ought to love our neighbor. Therefore, you too love the Lord your God, then yourself, then your neighbor as yourself, according to the fruits of this threefold love and the commandments concerning them.

5. Keeping God's Commandments. If you love God, keep and guard His commandments diligently. If you love Him, endure all that comes, for love endures. And be poor in spirit, moderate, and humble in heart. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," and the Lord saves the humble in spirit, and everyone who humbles himself will be exalted. But he who does not humble himself willingly will be humbled involuntarily by temptations, for the hand of the Lord is strong, and the Lord resists the proud, as they are the first to resist God. Therefore, be humble in spirit, in word, in demeanor, and in deed, for God does not despise a broken and humbled heart. Take as an example Him who humbled Himself to death, even death on a cross, and therefore God highly exalted Him, who was eternally exalted in His divinity, though He, being God, humbled Himself by taking the form of a servant. But you, if you think modestly about yourself, will speak the truth and will not be humbled, even if the loving God counts our not being prideful as humility. And know that just as the good things of this world are useless to us without the sunlight that presents and reveals them to the eyes of men, so also all human virtue is dark without humility. But humility, as has been said, gives birth to endurance.

6. Continual Mourning. Have continual mourning for your sins, for the sins of human nature, for which our Lord became man and was crucified and died. Mourn for the condemnation under which we were sentenced in this valley of tears, and in the pirate ship of this life and the afflictions of the body. For if Adam had not sinned, and we in him, we would not have been so condemned. Mourn because we are exiles from our spiritual homeland, having first lost our journey in the sensible paradise, and with tears call upon the mercy of Him who suffered without sin for us, so that He might make us pilgrims again, not through the sensible paradise but through the grace of His mysteries, and not all simply, but all who prepare themselves with uprightness of faith and the zeal of excellent works. Those who mourn thus are blessed, for they will be comforted by the Lord with heavenly consolations in the homeland, and here they are comforted by the firm hope of future blessedness through the assurance sent to them from heaven. All these things are lacking for the hard-hearted and transgressors of the Lord's commandments. But do not mourn for the loss of any good thing in the world, for such mourning kills a man, being the offspring of ingratitude, worldly attachment, and many deadly diseases. But if the attachment of nature compels you to such mourning, immediately transform the worldly tears into spiritual mourning. Then ask forgiveness from God for having mourned at all for the loss of a relative or some beloved thing. Do not mourn for solitude, bodily weakness, or the lack of necessities, but endure them with thanksgiving, for you hear, "I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined to me." Mourn also for your own failings, so that through tears the record of your sins may be blotted out.

7. Anger and Meekness. Let anger, wrath, quarreling, and pettiness not enter the treasury of your soul, for whoever is angry with his brother without cause and out of personal passion will be guilty of the fire of Gehenna. But let meekness, lack of anger, patience, and forbearance govern your soul, and in your words and deeds, cultivate such a disposition of the soul as much as possible. For blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land of the meek, the heavenly Jerusalem, and they also gain earthly longevity, living well, free

from plots, and after separation from the body, they are ceaselessly proclaimed, and they are continually deemed worthy of divine providence above all. "For to whom will I look," He says, "but to the meek and quiet one who trembles at My words?" Let your anger be against sin, against the demons who incite to it. If you are a ruler or judge, let it also be against the wicked and unjust, the workers of lawlessness, so as to destroy the examples of wickedness. But even so, temper the punishment of the wicked first with forbearance, then with compassion and gentleness as much as possible.

8. Pursue Righteousness. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied." If you have a burning desire and love for this virtue, the Lord will fill your longing, and here He will free you from all demonic and human oppression, and in the future, He will give you rest. Hunger and thirst for righteousness in another way, so that you may be satisfied there most of all, and here you may not grow weary of divine grace, whether it fills or strengthens you. If you are a ruler, distribute to each of those under you from the common goods according to the proportion of the benefit or need that each provides to the community. If you are a judge, do not pervert justice, do not show partiality in judgment, judging the small and the great alike. Let the rule of the law apply to you equally in every circumstance or rank. If you are a soldier, do nothing contrary to what is commanded. Do not slander, do not trouble anyone, and be content with your wages. Do not seize what is of no concern to you. If you are a merchant, do not conceal the defect of what you sell to deceive buyers. Do not oppress the needy with the burden of interest, calculating month upon month and year upon year. Weigh justly, and do not deceive and defraud your trading partner with unequal weights or other tricks. Do not cruelly and inhumanely exploit the times of necessity for life's needs, making the misfortunes of your brothers a pretext for your own wealth, nor hoard wine and grain to drive up prices. Let it suffice for you to gain from your trade each year enough to meet your own and your household's annual needs sufficiently, while the principal remains. Let there be a fixed time and place for your trade. Do not make the house of God a house of trade, nor the day of piety a day of impiety. Simply put, if you are a citizen of means, do not join house to house and field to field, encroaching on the need of your neighbors, or driving them out with harassment, or openly seizing their property with the expectation of corrupting the judge with favor and money. If you are a private individual and poor, hire yourself out or beg. Do not rob graves, do not steal from temples, do not steal. If you are a bishop, distribute the grace of the Spirit freely to the worthy. Flee the simony of Simon. Distribute ranks according to merit. Do and say all things impartially, and nothing for show. Be an example of all righteousness to those under your care. Exclude the unworthy from the sacred. If you are a priest, let your righteousness exceed all that has been said, for you are appointed to exceed in rank. Not only are you not permitted to trade unjustly, but you are not permitted to trade at all for profit and in a mercantile manner. Not only must you abstain from the lawless acts of wicked soldiers, but you must not serve as a soldier at all. You must not collect taxes. You must not engage in manual labor. Let your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, who were meticulous about the smallest matters but neglected mercy and justice, and spent the resources of orphans and widows on their own pleasures, using the pretext of tithes according to the law. God will provide for your necessities, and those who see you occupied solely with the worship of God and the care of their souls' salvation will support you. If you are a monk and consecrated to God, do not turn back to the desires of the world. Endure all things with constriction; rather, rejoice in constriction. Hold unwaveringly to your vow of poverty, obedience, and having no further dealings with the world, as you promised, for no one who puts his hand to the plow of spiritual

cultivation and looks back is fit for the kingdom of heaven. If you are a teacher and guide of the word, practice first what you teach others. For he who does and teaches will be called great in the kingdom of heaven, but he who teaches without doing will be called least. For he who desires to benefit others but does wrong, and by his words draws his hearers to good but by his example drives them away, wrongs both himself and others. He is condemned by his own words, just as true teachers are justified by their words. But those who scandalize many by the inconsistency of their words and life and wound the consciences of their brothers sin grievously, so that it would be better for them to have a heavy millstone tied around their neck and be cast into the sea than to cause one of the least to stumble. But let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven, who has given these things to men. Simply put, whatever your rank or state, choose rather to hunger with righteousness than to be filled with injustice. Choose rather to be wronged than to wrong. You will know what is just in everything from the civil laws, the sacred laws, the divine laws, and especially from the right reason naturally within you, which is the law of conscience and with which every divine and human law agrees. Above all, judge rightly between God and rulers. Render to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's. For God wills that Caesar should exist, and do not withhold what belongs to Caesar under the pretext of piety toward God, nor fear Caesar above God, demanding what is due to God. Judge rightly between God and all men. Judge rightly also between God and Mammon, the enemy of your salvation. Desire to give all to God, to serve Him in all things, and nothing to Mammon. "For no one can serve two masters," God and Mammon, who stand opposed in their demands and draw those who serve them in opposite directions. For what fellowship has light with darkness, salvation with destruction, truth with falsehood, being with non-being? Judge rightly also between soul and body, of which you are composed, and give the soul the rule over all, as it was appointed, and let the body be ruled and submit in all things, as long as they are united.

9. From Righteousness to Mercy. Proceed from doing right to showing mercy. Show mercy, that you may receive mercy. But mercy is not only in giving but in giving with sweetness, for God loves a cheerful giver, and the work of mercy without sympathy in the soul is almost nothing to the doer. Show mercy to all in disposition and deeds of kindness, but especially to the more deserving. These are those connected by kinship, then those more beneficial to the community, then the more needy, and then let your kindness extend to the rest according to your ability. There are spiritual mercies more beneficial to both givers and receivers than bodily ones, such as comforting the sorrowful, advising the doubtful, teaching the ignorant, correcting the sinner, forgiving the offender, bearing with the burdensome and harsh, and praying for all. The works of bodily mercy are to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, visit the sick, ransom the captive, and bury the dead. Where and how the need is greater and more urgent, there and thus is mercy more richly rewarded. But show mercy from what is justly acquired by you, for what is unjustly gained must be restored to the one wronged, not used to fulfill another's need, for this is to wrong, not to show mercy. Show mercy generously from what is necessary, not from what is necessary for life, which is determined by measure, but from what is necessary for living in a manner befitting your rank. For these have no fixed measure, and if you take from them and give to the needy, what is necessary remains. Give from your abundance, that is, from your surplus, whether food or clothing. If you have chosen the perfect life, give from what is simply double. If you are subject to the necessities of life, give from your abundance, for from this our own need is doubled. We are not compelled to give our own sufficiency to our brothers, nor are we

permitted to withhold the surplus of sufficiency in the needs of our brothers. For we must not give up our house but welcome and gather the homeless. We must not empty the granary but feed the one in need of nourishment. For it is commanded that those who fight for the right reason for the benefit of the world should have neither bag nor purse, so that they may accomplish their work unencumbered and without distraction. Therefore, they were fed by the Lord, who brought them the hearts of the faithful, who said, "The laborer is worthy of his wages," and now He commands those entrusted with the care of souls to do likewise. But to those who manage only their own life, He permits them to provide for themselves and their household what is useful for life, though He forbids them to hoard these things. Therefore, you too should acquire what is necessary for life lawfully and set it aside. Do not hoard, nor keep it hidden in safety, always adding newer to older, but rather store up treasure in heaven. For there it will be kept for you forever, safe from all corruption, whether from time, moths, thieves, or whatever usually consumes and destroys treasure, whether money, clothing, or food. The hands of the poor will send it there. And thus, what you labor for will abound for you, better than all corruption, and in this life, more will be gathered, God providing and preserving it, so that the poor may be fed by your wise and kind choice, and your treasure in heaven may be multiplied. Thus, you will not empty yourself by almsgiving but will increase your abundance both here and there. Generally speaking, give to the poor and to God through them from your fruits each year, from your income each month, from your dough each week, from your table each day, and from your storerooms as often and as much as you can, while preserving what is necessary for your life and your household. But to scatter all for Christ's sake and keep nothing back, which one might give to a beggar, is advised for those who can strip themselves for such a struggle with God as a work of perfection. It is not counted among the commandments or precepts but is left to the will.

10. Purity of Heart. Let your heart be pure from every passion, for the pure in heart will see God. And if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God. The heart is purified by hatred of all worldly things, by sincere love turning to the Lord, by constant meditation on His laws, by continual reading, by unceasing prayer, by humility, and by impartial love for one's neighbor according to God.

11. Peacemaking. If you see two brothers fighting, reconcile and make peace between them, that you may be called a son of God. For the eternal Word and Son of God, by His incarnation, destroyed the wall of hostility and reconciled us to God the Father. Make peace first within yourself, that is, let your body obey the lesser powers of your soul, and let them obey your inner reason, that is, your mind, and let your reason obey God. And if you wish to have peace from the war of demons and men and to bear what comes without resentment and with patience and without disturbance, confess your sins to God daily, and give thanks to Him continually, for He bears with your greater and lesser sins every day and hour, and consider yourself the greatest sinner of all men.

12. Persecution for Faith or Righteousness. If you are persecuted for the sake of faith or righteousness, do not grieve, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these. Rather, rejoice, using the wickedness of your persecutors for your own virtue, and with love for virtue, truth, and the eternal life, endure all things. Let your soul and mind be ready for death for the sake of truth, if necessary, so that even if you are not perfected by martyrdom, you may be judged a martyr by your intention, seeking such boldness and zeal from God, if He wills it, and hoping in Him, without whom we can do nothing. However, do not rush into

martyrdom unless God prompts you to reveal yourself for the edification of many and when the truth is in danger.

13. Unjust Reproach. If someone reproaches you unjustly and speaks every evil word against you, falsely accusing you of impiety toward God, do not be angry. Rather, rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven. If someone comes to you and says, "So-and-so says such-and-such about you," pause for a moment, then say, "May the Lord forgive him. He speaks the truth. These things are nothing compared to my other faults, which escape him, you, brother, and all men. Only the Lord and I know them." Thus, you will be crowned by the Lord, and you will send your brother away with benefit, if he is such a person. Then pray for both, that you may receive a double crown. Do not value the praise of men highly, for woe to us if all men praise us, if such a thing were possible. For we will hear that we have received our good things in this life. Consider our Lord above all, who was called a lawbreaker by the giver and perfecter of the law and the provider of every law to men; a sorcerer, who cast out every satanic activity that previously dominated the souls of men; a friend of tax collectors and sinners, who took upon Himself the human nature pure from all sin and lived such a life; a deceiver, who taught the truth, the supernatural and most high, and so sympathized with the deception of men out of utmost love for mankind that He chose to deliver them from it by His sufferings and to establish the truth. For this, He was mocked and died the death of criminals, the supernatural treasure of good things, the perfection of divine and human goods, who could have presented legions of angels to destroy the Jews and shake the whole world, yet He endured, leaving us an example, and prayed for those who crucified Him, especially for those who sinned in ignorance. For He willingly bore those terrible things for our improvement. But God the Father highly exalted Him for this, and gave Him the name above every name, so that He might also exalt those who choose to follow His rule. Rather, He Himself is our Lord, who receives this glory from Himself and the Father and gives it, receiving as man and giving as God. You will be undisturbed by the reproaches of men if you strive for good for the glory of God and your own salvation. For in the virtues of men, God is glorified by those who see them, who are lovers of God and beloved by Him, even if those who do them do not wish to reveal them. But God reveals them so that He may be glorified for the benefit of those who glorify Him, knowing that every good thing comes from God to men. "For no one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but on a stand." Therefore, God, who works with the virtues of men, also reveals them for His own glory, the ultimate purpose of which is the benefit of those who glorify Him, and the false slander of the wicked can never prevail over the good reputation of a good man.

14. Avoid Slander. Guard against speaking any slanderous word against your brother, for whoever says to his brother, "Fool," in anger, bitterness, or contempt, will be liable to the fire of Gehenna. For he is the image of God, just as you are. And what punishment is due to one who despises the divine image?

15. Reconciliation Before Offering. Do not offer your gift to God unless you have first been reconciled to your brother who has something against you. For you must not only refrain from holding a grudge or bearing resentment against your brother, but even if he is enslaved to passion, having a just or unjust reason for displeasure, you must care for his healing. And if you are obligated to visit the physically sick according to your ability, how much more the one who has received corruption in his soul. And this, if he thinks you are in any way the cause of his anger. Even if you know him to be hard-hearted, still seek reconciliation yourself. And if, when you seek it, he refuses, holding a grudge, you are blameless. Even if he remains unreconciled, do

not condemn him in your soul, nor reveal your brother's sickness to anyone else, but pray to the Lord to soften him or to forgive him. With these things presupposed, offer your gift confidently, and it will be a cleansing of your sins. Do these things daily, and do not present yourself to God while carrying a stumbling block in your soul. At least, do not let the sun go down on such anger, but be reconciled before nightfall by the way described. For you do not know what the next day will bring, and how will you confess to God in your nightly prayers if the poison of anger remains in your heart, or if you have not yet striven to cleanse it from your brother's heart according to your ability? Seek reconciliation with your brother: if he is the cause of the offense without justification, do so with humility and persuasion; if you are, satisfy his just passion with what is reasonable, with humility and confession of your fault.

16. Forgiveness. If your brother sins against you openly, then repents and asks for forgiveness, do not turn away his repentance. Even if he does this repeatedly, say seventy times seven, do not be angry, nor turn away his last repentance, but as long as he sins and repents and comes to you, forgive and release him, for our Lord does so for us all. And if we do not forgive our brothers, neither will our heavenly Father accept the final repentance of His servants, but as He has promised, so He will do to those who do not close their hearts to the repentance of their brothers, just as He deals with those who do not pity their fellow servant but justify themselves without compassion, more justly than mercifully.

17. Correcting a Sinning Brother. If your brother sins against you or against the divine law out of wickedness, that is, deliberately and unrepentantly, in the uncertainty of whether he commits such a sin in knowledge or ignorance, for his benefit, if he is wicked out of ignorance, or for your own safety, so that you do not associate with the wicked and partake of their evil, or appear to do so, act thus: First, take him aside privately, with no one else mediating, and explain his sin to him with kindness. If you persuade him and he changes, you have corrected your brother. But if he persists in the same things, despising your instruction, do not neglect him even then, but take one or two others who may be able to shame him, and do the same with them. These will be your witnesses before God and men of your compassion for your brother. But if he still persists in his fault stubbornly, tell the Church. And if he refuses to listen to the Church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector, excluded from fellowship but not hated, but rather pitied, whether he is a ruler or a private individual, wise or foolish, layman or monk or bishop. For you must flee from those who hide a wolf within under the appearance of a sheep's clothing and do not wish to depart from their wickedness even after such exposure, but in the hypocrisy of friendship or virtue seize and destroy trusting souls. Such care must not be taken for trivial sins or trivial persons, but where great harm comes to the sinner, and to the one who seems to share in it out of goodwill and familiarity, and scandal is caused to those who see it, and a reward is expected for the effort of correction, with good discernment and love for the brother always determining what is necessary. If you hold a position of authority, extend such care to all, and bring all to the observance of the divine laws. Even if the sin is public, correct it with zeal, using your authority, as our Lord overturned the tables of the money-changers in the temple.

18. Cutting Off Offenders. If someone in your company disturbs your peace and causes you to stumble before God and men, cut him off, even if he is as necessary to you as a right eye or a right hand. But separate from him with love. Do not despise or hate him after parting, but rather pray for his salvation, and ask the Lord to correct you also from your faults.

19. Avoiding Scandal. Likewise, always turn away the stumbling block of your neighbors, for it is the destruction of love. But if, while you are doing good, either for yourself or for the common benefit, and especially in matters pertaining to the truth of the faith, someone is scandalized, do not worry, nor cease your good work because of him, but let him be scandalized. For he is a blind guide of the blind, of those who follow his distortion. However, be careful not to pursue good for the sake of causing scandal. For this destroys the word of good, and you are liable for the scandal, as has been said.

20. Oaths and Truthfulness. If you ever swear an oath under pressing necessity, keep it. Even if you make the oath to an unbeliever, keep it all the more, so that he does not despise the faith, seeing you, who profess to believe, despising it by perjury. But do not swear at all unless it is absolutely necessary. Without the strength of oaths, make your words firm, whether you are to be believed or not. For what is beyond "yes" and "no" is from the evil one. If you wish to be believed without oaths, always speak the truth in your words and promises. For we believe those who have given proof of truthfulness without oaths more easily than those who have often been caught in lies, even if they offer countless oaths. Therefore, simply flee falsehood, for the liar pleases the father and originator of lies and provokes the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of God. But if you are caught by some passion in a promise without an oath, or even under oath, to do something contrary to the divine law and good conscience, do not wish to complete the wickedness under the pretext of truth and oath-keeping. And to avoid such entanglements, discipline your tongue, and let no idle or corrupt word come out of your mouth, for you will give an account for every idle word on the day of judgment. But let all your speech be for pious need and the edification of your hearers, and let your tongue utter the name of God in your conversations and prayers with fear and reverence.

21. In all things, utterly transcend the pedagogical law given through Moses, just as in not swearing at all, and from hating adultery and all the shameful acts of licentiousness and turning away from them in deed, ascend to not even desiring them at all, nor even looking with curiosity. For such looking gives birth to desire, and desire in the soul, when fully formed, is the licentiousness of the heart and the root of licentiousness in action. Therefore, he who looks at a woman with the desire to possess her is already an adulterer in the inward working of licentiousness.

22. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but strive to outdo one another in good. To the one who strikes you on the right cheek, offer also the other, unless the truth is endangered by your forbearance. For even He who legislated such forbearance, our Jesus, did not merely offer the other cheek to the one who struck Him but also rebuked him, saying, “If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?”—lest He should seem to remain silent and endure the shameless one because He condemned Himself as having spoken improperly. For this took place in a court of law. But apart from such necessity, offer also the other cheek to the one who strikes you. And to the one who wishes to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone compels you to go one mile, go with him two, if possible. For if you prepare yourself to endure the blows of another, you will not strike first yourself. And if you allow someone to take your cloak from you who wishes to dispute with you over your tunic, how will you endure taking another’s tunic, or the troubles in the courts, when you are dragged there by those who wrong you? And if you add to the journey when compelled, how will you compel another, or plot madly against the one who compels you? Through this forbearance, you will be free from all sin that arises from retaliation, and you will be crowned by God and men, and you will sober those who act with violence, or those who witness it.

23. Give to everyone who asks of you, without discrimination. Even if he is of another faith or seeks for God's sake, do not turn him away. And if he simply begs, driven by obvious and pressing need, do not neglect him because of his unbelief, but have mercy on him because of his nature and for the sake of God, who created him and tolerates his wickedness. Even if he is your enemy, consider his need an opportunity to benefit him and to help him abundantly in his need. It is most sweet to benefit someone who has harmed you, even as we ought to pray for the salvation of the souls and sufficiency of life for those who hate us. And even if the one who asks is a sinner, show him mercy without condemnation, according to your ability. And do not turn away from the one who wishes to borrow from you. Lend without interest, whether it is money or anything else that perishes and sustains human life, but do so solely out of love for your neighbor. Do not say, "Come back later, and I will give it to you tomorrow," when you have the ability to give immediately. For you do not know what the next day will bring. Nor should you refrain from lending to your brother, calculating that you yourself might later fall into need of borrowing. Rather, hope that you are lending to the Lord, who will not overlook your need. And if you are not able to lend or to show abundant mercy, give from what you have. Even if what you give falls far short of the need, a cup of cold water will be rewarded if you cannot provide wine and fragrance. And if, like the widow, you give two small coins, having only that, it will be accounted as much as many talents by the Judge. Yet to give all that one has to the poor is the mark of perfection, while to measure mercy according to one's ability is necessary for all. But if at any time you are completely without means, even though you desire to give, do not be discouraged. Instead, sympathize with the one in need, confess your inability to help, and pray for him before sending him away. This is even better than giving, for it will seem more pleasant and compassionate to him, and it will be more blessed for you.

24. Love all who hate you without exception. Bless those who curse you. Do good to them as much as you are able, and praise them, not pretending love in doing so, but with genuine disposition, looking to the Lord and seeking to turn them from their wickedness. For they will be ashamed of your forgiveness when they are sincerely and without hypocrisy benefited and loved by you. And if not even then, you will have the Lord as your rewarder. Always make it a part of your prayer to pray for all who wrong and persecute you. Pray also for the salvation of every creature of God, if possible. For if you love those who love you, what reward will you have? Even the most wicked of men do this. And if you pray especially for those who do good to you and love you, or for your relatives according to the flesh, what more are you doing than the many? For this is a common endeavor among all men. But our heavenly Father, who is perfect in compassion and kindness, as He is perfect in all things, makes His sun rise and sends rain not only on the good but also on the evil, though He embraces the good and God-loving with a special love. Therefore, we too ought to imitate our Creator and Father in all things possible.

25. When you fast, pray, show mercy, or do any good deed for which you expect a reward, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. That is, do not seek to make it known to men by words, gestures, or any contrivance, lest you lose your reward, having received instead the praise of men as recompense for the good you intended. Nor should you reproach anyone for a good deed you have done for them, considering that whatever good you have had, have, or do is from God, without whom we can neither have nor do anything. For what do you have that you did not receive? And if you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it? Consider and say that only your sins, shortcomings, and weaknesses of nature or will are truly your own, for all such things come to us from ancestral sin and our natural or personal

active sin. But God, in His surpassing love for mankind, promises rewards for the obedience to His laws that we offer as our duty, provided that what we do is free from all hypocrisy and temporal calculation. These rewards He will surely give openly in the theater of angels and the communion of the blessed. Therefore, you must do all good deeds without display.

26. Take care of what is necessary for your life and for those with you, if there are any. For the one who neglects this and remains idle is unworthy of both human and divine blessings. Prepare what is necessary for life, so that you neither need to ask others nor lack the means to give to those in need. For to need others in necessities because you are occupied with higher and more exalted pursuits, which belong to the contemplative life or to more public service, or because of the unexpected shortages that arise from time to time, is praiseworthy, just as Mary is praised above Martha for choosing the better and unassailable portion. But to fall into such need through laziness and negligence is shameful. And while it is necessary for those who are able to give to such people, it is fitting for anyone with understanding to avoid falling into such need through idleness. Therefore, take care for these things, but do not exhaust yourself with anxieties about the future. For this is a sign of insatiability, unbelief, and forgetfulness of the end that we daily expect, lest you also hear, "Fool! This night your soul will be required of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" For it is not through our worrying alone that the necessities of life come to us, but primarily through divine providence, which cares not only for men but also for birds and plants. Therefore, He who adds to our life as long as He wills also provides for our necessities. It is our part to take care and to act, but the success, when obstacles are removed, belongs to divine providence. And we will gain nothing from such anxiety if we are consumed by difficult and distracting concerns that hinder all other praiseworthy endeavors, or if we are constantly anxious in our souls about what might result from such turmoil—as the pagans do, who do not know or do not rightly know divine providence. But you, be active and use the provision God has given you for life. Be free from anxiety about what will happen, casting all your care on the Lord. And do not be anxious today about what ought to be the concern of tomorrow, whether it is what you will do or what will happen to you. For each day has enough trouble and affliction of its own. Tomorrow will have its own concerns. Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you sufficiently, or even abundantly, according to the arrangement of divine providence, which makes your labors fruitful or provides what you need even when you are unable to work. Do not place your hope for life in man, place, possessions, or money. For cursed is the one who trusts in man and in the things of this transient human life. Let your only concern be how to please God, and He will take care of you, as you serve His will according to your ability, or as others serve you if you are unable. Let your only hope be in God, for this hope alone does not disappoint. And let your concern for daily necessities be according to God and in full view of His law, so that neither your body nor your mind is distracted from the worship owed to God at all times, or from the works of possible and necessary kindness to your brother. And if you have any rest, consider it as provided by God, and use it with thanksgiving and generosity toward the one in need. And if anything is lacking to you, seek its fulfillment from the Lord with patience, and you will find it. Even if you are ever in need of others for necessities, do not be discouraged by this, but as fulfilling the divine will, seek from those who are able to provide for you. Do not be grieved if you approach someone and are refused, nor hate the one who does not provide. For perhaps the reward for kindness to you is reserved by God for another, who will provide for you with eagerness.

FIRST SERVICE OF GOD

27. Be without attachment to all things of this present world, and let your entire striving be firmly directed toward the future life. For whoever loves father, mother, son, daughter, brother, or anything temporal more than God and the blessedness stored up for us in Him is not worthy of God. And if you have resolved to follow the life according to Christ, do not delay in doing so, nor, having begun, turn back because of concern for your relatives according to the flesh, not even to bury your parents, as many say. For the one who chooses the life according to Christ must not return to mingle with those who live the passionate and dead life, but rather, if necessary, let such people bury their own dead. But you, treat as your own those who do the will of God and are able to advance you in it, both by word and example, or who can be advanced by you, following the rule of Jesus in these matters. And if you still live in the common life of society, do not endanger yourself by sharing in the unbelief or wickedness of your relatives according to the flesh out of affection for them, but withdraw from their fellowship and goodwill, and turn away wherever God leads you from the danger. But where the love of parents or other relatives does not oppose divine love, and where there is great necessity to care for them and to provide for them as much as possible—first for your father, then your mother, then your children, then your brothers—for the neglect of the possible goodwill toward them is a denial of divine love. For as long as you are not directly united to God, having completely broken away from the bonds of this life, as the true disciples of Christ, but still live in the social life, you owe it to fulfill all your obligations to those to whom you are bound, both to your country and to your relatives and fellow citizens. And you will act piously in doing so, just as the opposite is the greatest impiety.

28. If anyone says to you, "Such a one is a teacher or a saint and can benefit you," do not believe it simply or approach him without examination, but carefully examine his works, and knowing him by his fruits, then approach him. For if his fruit is rotten and his own life is corrupt, how can he benefit another? And some, having approached certain individuals without examination and encountering destroyers instead of saviors, and wolves instead of sheep, have been greatly harmed. And if you approach someone with reverence as one who can benefit you, and then, as you proceed, you recognize that he is not benefiting but rather harming you, withdraw from him. But the reverence and faith you initially showed him will be rewarded. For he who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and he who receives a child in the name of Jesus receives Jesus, for the work of those who reverently receive is judged not according to the worth of those honored and benefited, but according to the intention and eagerness of the benefactors. However, do not judge if you discover someone to be such, or if he is condemned by the rumor of many, lest you be judged by the God who judges all without fail. For who are you to judge another's servant? Whether he stands or falls is his master's concern. First, if you judge your brother in some fault, you may be allowed to fall into a greater one, while he is helped by being judged by you. Second, you must not despair of the restoration of the fallen, for God is able and very willing to raise him up, if only he repents and recognizes his fault. Nor should the one who stands be proud, for this itself is the greatest fall: to be puffed up in thought, word, or deed against your brother, or to judge him at all, when his standing is clearly from God and His grace, and the varied providence of God toward the fallen is unknown. Moreover, many lie before men but not before God, even if they seem to stand; and many lie before God destructively, while seeming to stand before men. Often we ourselves, having a beam in our eye, scrutinize the speck in our brother's eye, being distorted by both self-love and hatred of our brother, which is much worse. Therefore, you must guard against this very carefully and be attentive to your own sins, not

those of others, as far as blame and judgment are concerned. But what pertains to those in positions of authority concerning those who scandalize or harm many by their irrational conduct has been said earlier.

29. Never speak ill of your brother, for this is much worse than judging. For the one who judges defiles his own soul, unlawfully seizing the divine order, but the one who speaks ill murders his brother with the sword of the tongue. And no sword is sharper than an evil tongue. And to speak precisely, the one who speaks ill sins worse than a murderer. For to murder is to take away a man's temporal life, but the one who speaks ill destroys the honor and good reputation of the one spoken against, as far as it depends on him, which endures forever and for which those who live earnestly give their very lives. Therefore, if the worth of the good taken away measures the wickedness in the one who takes it away and does wrong, reasonably the one who speaks ill is worse than a murderer, as has been said, for he takes away a greater good than the murderer: the good reputation of the brother among men.

30. Simply put, whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to all, if possible. And what you hate to be done to you by others, do not do to another. If you wish to be loved, pitied, praised, cherished, and thanked, do these things to your brothers. If you hate to be slandered, envied, spoken ill of, or defrauded, abstain from these things toward your brother, and let your disposition toward your brother be governed by your disposition toward yourself. And if our Master washed the feet of His disciples, giving an example, so that you might do likewise for your brother, either as a demonstration of goodwill or because of such a pressing need, how will it be permitted for you to speak ill of him in his absence? And if the love owed to him includes risking your life for the one you love, how is it not the ultimate hatred and beyond satanic hostility to kill your brother with your tongue? Therefore, do not speak ill yourself, and rise from the council of those who speak ill, or sit in silence.

31. Let there be no satiety or limit in your prayers of glorifying God, giving thanks, and confessing, if possible. For it is possible for you, even while working, to set your mind before God. But the measure and manner of requests have been generally defined, so that whatever you ask of God must be reduced to seven things, which the Lord's Prayer contains. Of these, three pertain to the salvation of the soul in attaining the hoped-for blessedness in the kingdom of God, while the others are, as it were, supplementary. Therefore, the Lord adds the rest to those who first seek His kingdom and righteousness. But these too must be referred to the seeking of eternal life. For even the sufficiency of daily food is necessary, so that the body, being sustained in this life for a time, may serve the purification of the spirit through the works of the philosophy according to Christ in the more perfect, or endure the labors of human arts and pursuits in those who piously and justly provide for their living through such means. And the forgiveness of sins is the removal of the obstacles to eternal life, and not being led into temptation—that is, not being abandoned to the depth of temptations—is the removal of another obstacle. And the evil one—that is, the wickedness of the body to which we are joined—sets many things against us in many ways, from which we pray to God to be delivered as much as possible. This is the pattern of what we ought to seek from our Creator and Father, and whatever goes beyond this is pagan babbling. Nor does it differ to expand this pattern in detail through more words in prayer, as long as all requests are referred to these seven kinds.

32. When you seek some spiritual good specifically from God, or a bodily good that follows and does not oppose spiritual goods, seek it fervently, humbly, and persistently. Do not knock once and then withdraw, but knock continually, that it may be opened to you, and ask, that it may be given to you. For everyone who asks

receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. And if men, even being evil, give good things to their children, even when they do not ask, or do not yet know how to ask, or even seek harmful things out of ignorance, how much more will our heavenly Father give good things to those who ask Him, being supremely good? And if you seek and do not receive, either God is testing you, or what you seek is not beneficial to you, even if it seems so, or it is not beneficial to another for whom you seek. But if you seek for yourself, and do so piously, persistently, and for what is conducive to salvation, He will surely give it to you, unless He is testing you through patience.

33. In troubles and distress, do not lose heart, knowing that the path to salvation is accomplished through voluntary and involuntary afflictions, while the path to destruction is through ease and relaxation. Do not fear the narrow way, for having begun courageously, you will soon find comfort. Rather, every affliction is only at the gate, and for the one who is deemed worthy and strives to pass through it and enter with patience, great spaciousness awaits along the way—just as the opposite happens to those who choose the wide and painless gate. And even if you run the course of life under some yoke or burden, do not be afraid, for the yoke of the Lord is easy, and His burden is light, not only because it agrees with the rational life of man, which many of the ancient philosophers also touched upon, nor only because of the hoped-for reward, but also because the Lord sends many consolations in afflictions, sustaining and refreshing those who suffer hardship for His love with joy, and not allowing them to be tempted beyond what they can bear. And prepare yourself for involuntary afflictions by choosing to afflict yourself voluntarily, in food, drink, clothing, travel, sleep, and in general in a more humble life in all things, but in moderation. For God and the Logos given to us by Him do not wish us to voluntarily endure hardship beyond the strength of the body, but just as He Himself, testing us with the onslaughts of temptations, mixes relief with afflictions so that we do not grow weary, so He wishes us to mix them reasonably and piously when we voluntarily afflict ourselves. And the love of God and the profit from it will lead you to voluntary affliction and the humbling of the body, when, enlightened by His grace, you see the profit from such affliction and straitness, which is an inexpressible spaciousness and joy of the soul, known only to those who suffer.

34. Continually remember death and judgment, and prepare yourself for departure, for you do not know at what hour of the day or watch of the night death will come like a thief, seizing you unexpectedly. Rather, be always ready, girded, watchful, and attentive, with the lamps of your soul lit, awaiting the coming of the Lord. In the morning, say, "Perhaps I will die by evening," and in the evening, "Perhaps I will not rise tomorrow." Always keep in mind the example of those virgins who, because of their diligence and negligence, were divided into wise and foolish. The wise immediately entered the bridal chamber, having the brightness sought for the soul ready within them, while the foolish were pitifully shut out, having begun too late and at an inopportune time to seek it. Remember also the example of those who received the talents: some gained more with them and were called good and faithful servants, sharing in their master's happiness and receiving the rank of sons and heirs, while others, in carelessness and luxury, hid their talent in the ground and did not work with what they had received. They were deprived of it and sent away without sympathy to punishment. And if there is any grace of God in you, work it out as a path, for you will be required to give an account of it. Do so with diligence, because of the uncertainty of death, for the present time alone is the time for labor, and the time after this is for recompense.

FIRST SERVICE OF GOD

35. Every gift entrusted to you by God, through which you can benefit both yourself and others, if you have chosen the communal life, do not hide it away, but share it with those in need. Just as you received it freely from the Lord, so also distribute it freely. However, do not give what is holy to dogs, nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you instead of showing gratitude. And if they do not accept your care for them at first, withdraw and shake the dust from your feet. And if they persecute you from the whole city, flee to another. For it is neither just nor reasonable to stubbornly seek to save those who do not wish to be benefited, exposing yourself to obvious danger. Perhaps you will be more useful to many others and will fight the good fight for the truth at the right time.

36. Strive for childlike innocence and simplicity, for without such a disposition and preparation, it is impossible to enter the kingdom of heaven. In guarding against evil, imitate the serpents, but in simplicity and uprightness, imitate the doves. For it is a great wretchedness for a rational being to be outdone by irrational animals in the excellences of the soul.

37. Strive to fulfill all the commandments of God, especially those whose transgression is a mortal sin. These are the commandments that bear the fruit of love, and their transgression is the corruption of love. For the written law, the prophets, and especially the Gospel law overflow with love for God and neighbor, and by love our soul lives, just as the body lives by the soul. Therefore, when even one of the commandments of love is transgressed, we are spiritually dead. And just as it is impossible for a dead person to enter eternal life while still dead, so it is impossible for one who has transgressed one of these commandments and thus died spiritually to enter eternal life, especially if he carries this death with him at the departure of the body.

38. If you do all that is commanded, say, "I am an unworthy servant," and not only say it but also think it, not as fulfilling a divine command to think and speak this way, but because the truth is so. For every law given to us by God does not aim at the repayment of what we owe Him, which is beyond all repayment because of the blessings He has given us, but at the submission of our will to the divine will, desiring to live under the divine rule. And no one can fulfill even one of God's laws with precision, let alone all of them at once, burdened as we are with human weakness. But God, in His love for mankind, takes into account our inherent weakness of body and will, provided we confess it.

39. If you sin in anything, even in many things leading to death, repent, and God will immediately forgive you. But such repentance must first involve the person condemning the sin and himself because of it. Then he must be contrite in heart and crushed because of the estrangement from God caused by the sin. Next, he must hate the sin and completely turn away from it. Then he must approach God with reverence and confess the sin sincerely. After this, he must continually be contrite and confess that he is a sinner. Then he must make some reparation for the fault, as the one who grants forgiveness through the Church may direct, or as his conscience suggests. For example, if you were proud, humble yourself greatly. If you reviled someone, honor them. If you criticized someone, praise them. If you grieved someone, comfort them. If you were angry, endure the anger of others, and add love to the one grieved by your anger. If you hated someone, love them. If you were gluttonous, fast. If you spoke too much, be silent. If you owed something to someone, repay it with interest, or if you cannot repay that person, show mercy to another from your own resources. And so on for other sins. And know that no sin is unforgivable, except the despair of salvation. For the one who despairs of salvation because of the multitude of sins either loves to sin continually or suffers from the disease of pride, refusing to humble himself through repentance. Such a person falsely accuses God of

harshness and lack of compassion, when He is by nature merciful, loving, and most gentle, who has given us all things, needing nothing from us, and who came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. In this, the one who despairs sins most grievously and incurably, and many of the saints consider this despair to be blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, which is neither forgiven in this age nor in the age to come. But every Christian must believe and think without doubt that if he condemns his sins and turns to the Lord, receiving Him with tears and humility, God will immediately be reconciled to him. And if he adds diligence in doing good, according to the saying, "Turn from evil and do good," he will receive great grace from God. And if he begins to care for a rational life, then neglects it a little, and again begins to care for it with tears, God will immediately receive him, for He is without malice toward those who repent. You have the examples of the prodigal son, the harlot, the tax collector, and the thief, as well as countless examples and teachings from the Old and New Testaments. For God, in His providence, has willed to confirm the steadfastness of true repentance in every way, so that no one should despair because of the multitude of sins, but that everyone should confidently approach the most gentle and compassionate Father through repentance. Especially, the Word of God Himself urges this, speaking both through the Forerunner and through Himself: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." For He Himself has opened the way to the heavenly kingdom for us and has gone before us as a forerunner, having ascended there on our behalf. Therefore, though He was sinless, He was in the likeness of sinful flesh. From that time, the kingdom has been opened to us; only repentance is needed. For to sin not at all is difficult, if not impossible. Let the fruits of repentance be shown to you, both those mentioned above concerning reparation and, for each fault, the fruit of almsgiving, through which we draw God's mercy toward us, which is much richer and more abundant.

40. Give thanks to God continually, both in thought and word, for the gifts given to you, taking Jesus as your example, who, to be a model of such goodness for you, often openly presented Himself in thanksgiving to God the Father. Therefore, give thanks to the Lord because He made you exist, because He made you a human being, because He made you a Christian, because He has adorned your soul and body with whatever and however many excellences, and because from birth He provides for you daily with paternal care, gifts, visitations, guidance, and deliverance from dangers both spiritual and bodily. Give thanks also for the temptations that have befallen you at times, and consider that the primary cause of these is ancestral sin, to which this passionate and sorrowful state of existence necessarily followed for humanity, not so much for punishment as for purification for those who have understanding and choose to be purified, with the cooperation of God. Also blame your own sins, and consider every temptation a divine benefit for those who endure it with patience, and believe that some benefit, whether visible or hidden, comes to you from it. Be assured that you deserved to be tempted even more, but the Lord, in His goodness, took account of your weakness. Confess also continually to God that in temptations you became faint-hearted and, not recognizing the divine benefit, you lost the profit that comes from patience, if indeed we are commanded to gain our souls through patience.

Epilogue.

These things briefly comprise the law of our Lord Jesus. These are the first and true worship of God, and without them, it is impossible for a person to enter the blessedness prepared for him. Therefore, we all who have promised Christianity in baptism are obliged to fulfill these things, whether we are monks or live in

the affairs of the world, and, as has been said, we must not transgress any of them. But if we do transgress, we must repent and confess without delay. If some of these things belong to the more perfect life, which monks undoubtedly undertake and promise to fulfill with God's help, the fact that those enslaved to worldly necessities cannot attain them will not harm them. But as for what applies to all Christians, as has been said, all are equally responsible for keeping these things, and the difference in the reward from God will correspond to the measure and quality of their keeping, in the different mansions with Him, that is, in the different degrees of the final blessedness, just as, according to the different transgressions of the divine laws, when they are mortal, there are different punishments in Hades. If some of the holy commandments are lacking in this writing, some are implicitly contained, some you will gather from the sacred Scriptures, and experience will teach you the rest, as the grace of God adds light to your mind until you are led to the perfection of the life in Christ, which is the complete renunciation of the world and possessions, perfect non-acquisitiveness, the crucifixion of the desires of the flesh, unwavering focus on and submission to the Lord, and submission to every human being for the Lord's sake. To Him be glory forever. Amen.

TO THEODORE BRANAS

IX. To Theodore Branas. Personal Apology (1464).

† Apology Concerning Silence: To the Same.

1. We departed from there intending to leave, and not without divine providence. Upon arriving at the desired stillness, we offer a small thanks to the God who set us free, confirming that earlier covenant and adding to it the present circumstances, so that from both, the final account of our many works and words for the sake of the race may be composed, addressed to God Himself and to those who love Him. This account will fittingly be followed by the silence that now surrounds us. Indeed, even now we remain silent toward all, and for this reason, we present this brief discourse as a kind of apology for our long silence to those who love us in God. The terrible things concerning the Church, which even the birds on this mountain sing of and lament, are a continual burden to us, as they are evident to all. Yet nothing has escaped our notice, even though our friends hide it to spare us grief. As the divine David said, "They have reproached my soul in vain," and "their tongue has gone over the earth." We say they have reproached us in vain because we mind our own affairs; we do not concern ourselves with what they do, whether poorly or wickedly, nor do we oppose them in any way. Why, then, should they make us the object of their idle curiosity, when we trouble them not at all? If they have repaid evil for good, as the divine David also said, "Injustice has lied to itself," that is another matter. And sometimes we judge them, following my Jesus. But it has not escaped us that they have even plotted against the life of our humble existence, though we care little for it. For what need is there for us to live any longer, making our work nothing but continual prayer, food, sleep, and this deep darkness with its accompanying tears? One of the ancients once said, "Now it is good for me to die, for the truth has died before me," and another said, "For those to whom I am fearsome, this is not the time; for those to whom this is the time, I am not fearsome."

2. Concerning all that is reported about them, we are divided in three ways. First, we are deeply grieved by such a calamity, considering the reproach from outsiders, the wound to the conscience of our own people, the shamelessness against the truth, the wronged, and those who suffer with the wronged. These things are beyond words or even thought for those who know what the wicked demon has wrought for almost two years now. One would be driven mad to ponder these things. It is enough to mourn and lament while reflecting on them, which we do, leaving it to others to mourn our sins. Rather, we mourn for both, attributing the cause of the common calamity to our sins. Yet we are comforted by the pious zeal of Christians up to now, and by the knowledge and love for humanity of the ruler. For this has been the reason why our Church still stands and why many have not been killed according to the desires of the slanderers, as God has moved him. Just as divine mercy first moved the establishment of the Church, so also his love for humanity has preserved it, for the Church was then established as free through us and has remained so with many of his gifts even to his successors. But this recent innovation has come from us Christians, for those who have done these things must be counted among Christians because of the hope of repentance. Therefore, though the times are harsh and there is much fear about the future for all who consider our affairs not without God, the zeal of the well-meaning and good, and the love for humanity shown by those in power up to now, gives some hope that the affairs of our Church have not yet completely perished. But if we are deceived, along with all the good and wise, and if God has raised them up with methods worse than we can

imagine, so that they might become benefactors of the race, unnoticed by all others, then we should rejoice, leaving off lamentation and giving them great thanks. Yet I cannot easily believe this, and it seems to me a riddle greater than any riddle. What it is will be revealed to those who are to live in the future. If this paradox is to come to pass, so be it. But whether they are saviors or destroyers, or whether God is working through them or in some other way, we hope to be delivered quickly and saved from the many sins for which we are being chastised, so that we may not live under the rule of their good or evil deeds. We say we sin in our personal life and sin more than all men, and we tremble at the fearful judgment seat of God because of this. As for the common affairs, it is not even necessary to say whether we have governed well or poorly. It is enough for us that God knows these things; we do not need the testimony of men. Almost all who knew us well and could judge rightly about all things have departed happily from this present life. For our former life was truly life, but now it is a prison, chains, a tomb, darkness, and the valley of weeping, the prelude to the coming judgment, unless, contrary to expectation, God, as is His custom, sends His most gentle pardon. What good, then, can one do in such darkness? "The bellows are spent," it is said, "the furnace is spent; the silversmith labors in vain."

3. Whatever has been accomplished by us in the midst of such evils is known to all the good and wise of today. But as I said, it is enough for us that God knows all. If we were to give an account, out of untimely ambition or rather foolish exchange, of our struggles for the common salvation and life over the course of thirty years, it would require many volumes. The first part of our present disposition is grief for the common suffering, which the Lord knows how great it is within us. Beyond this, we grieve for the causes of these things and are deeply pained with much love, having the same God as our witness and conscience, knowing that they have made themselves accountable to so many judgments in the divine court, that they have troubled and scandalized so many souls. But here too we must preserve love, not recounting the multitude and magnitude of their offenses, but only beseeching God. And indeed, we beseech Him with many tears, as always, even in this discourse, that the Almighty may quickly and fervently implant in them awareness and condemnation of their sins, or even in us, for our sins, and we pray for all. Or He may act, even against their will, and comfort those who hope in Him and all others, as He knows best. For they themselves can heal all things through their repentance, and God can heal the sufferings and pains of the pious, even if they remain unrepentant. But if we are all abandoned with them, that is another matter. Finally, the third part is to make known to those who love us our personal disposition concerning these events, since they have, as I have already said, reproached my soul in vain and without cause. Therefore, the great David, among prophets and kings, singing in prayer to God, says, "You have given me as a reproach to the fool; I became mute and did not open my mouth, for You have done it. For You have chastened man with rebukes for iniquity." Consistently with this disposition, he calls himself a worm and not a man, a reproach of men and the scorn of the people. But what can we find more insignificant than a worm, we who are so much inferior to David's nobility in every way? How shall we rightly depict our nothingness in thought and word, for which it is fitting that we be reproached and scorned by men even more? Therefore, we ought much more to consider ourselves justly a reproach of men, but to attribute the reproaches of fools to the truest cause, which is that God is the one who makes us a reproach to fools and chastens us with rebukes for iniquity. For either He allows the reproach of fools as a rebuke to our conscience for certain private sins, unknown to all men but known to Him alone, and sets against it the praise of the many and the wise, so that we may be found

purified, recognizing and thankfully bearing the divine purpose concerning us; or He allows us, provoked to rebuke those who act lawlessly against the common good, to be chastened by their false reproaches, so that we may learn not to entrust the word of truth to all indiscriminately nor to attempt to heal those who are incurable. For such people, trampling on the healing, tear apart those who wish to heal them, bringing false charges against them for iniquity that does not exist and deceiving the simple, as the Pharisees and their companions, the corrupters of the divine law, once did to our Master and Savior. For some of them were blinded by ignorance, while others, willingly doing evil, called the healing of the sick on the Sabbath a violation of the law, not knowing that even Moses, who legislated rest on the Sabbath, would have allowed it, being so gentle. This would have been preserving the law, not breaking it, for under such a mindset he also established the law. Otherwise, Moses would not have been divine. But we leave aside the rest of the Savior's superiority and the order of both laws, which escaped those who did not wish to see. Our Jesus then advised His disciples to beware of such people, while fulfilling the unrelenting dispensation for us. He could not have kept this command for Himself, nor could He have boldly opposed wickedness, just as the blessed Paul later did, enduring not only the reproaches of those opposed to the faith but also of the false brothers, yet not separating himself from association with the multitude, for he had no authority to do so. "Necessity is laid upon me," he says, "and woe to me if I do not preach the gospel." And it was necessary for him to mingle with the many and thus fulfill the divine will, for which he was set apart from his mother's womb, as he truly says of himself, balancing the reproaches of the wicked with the thanksgivings of the good, or rather, for the common benefit of the brethren who were attentive to his grace, weighing his own sufferings from the wicked against the ministry entrusted to him by God, fulfilling it with patience. But if we must speak more discerningly about these things, both Paul and the chorus of the earlier apostles, following the rule of the Master and Teacher, boldly unveiled the divine truth and guarded against the audacity of the shameless, until it was necessary for the end of their struggles to be set for each, as they desired, and for them to be deemed worthy of the glory laid up for them.

4. But let us return to David. For us, then, since God, out of His great compassion, administers this remedy—even to those who are not worthy to be called worms, but rather are like corpses full of foulness, laid out as food for worms—we ought all the more to endure and willingly remain silent, knowing that it is God who permits this and who trains our endurance through the insults of the foolish, for our instruction. Therefore, we will never oppose them, either by word or in writing, following the divine purpose for our salvation. And even apart from this reasoning, it would be reasonable and fitting for us to reject any defense against them. For if all were equally foolish, our labor in this matter would be in vain. But since all, or nearly all, except for a few of them, hold the rank of the sensible and know well all that is good in us, let those who are sensible suffice to answer for us. They will answer even in silence, with the conscience within their souls bearing witness on our behalf, striking down the shameless audacity against the truth. And even if it should happen that all men, along with themselves, were suddenly changed and ignorant—not only attributing to us what they mockingly write in matters that are no jest, but also speaking every evil word against us—we would rejoice, considering the gain that comes from this, as we daily hear the overseer of truth and righteousness, our only hope, offering this to His servants. This alone would suffice for us to disregard such things. Moreover, the order that God has established advises this, and we know that the leaders of our shared philosophy have especially preserved this order, making laughter or silence their whole response to the

disturbances caused by such opinions and choices. For when one of the ancient sages was told, "So-and-so speaks ill of you," he replied, "I am not surprised; for they could never speak well." Another, who was reviled by those he had benefited, compared himself to the plane trees under which men take shelter in a storm but, when fair weather returns, pluck their leaves and insult them as they pass. Another said, "Consider it great training if you can bear ignorance." Another, to one who had uttered many insults, said, "You have done well, leaving nothing unsaid." Another, when insulted, wrote on his forehead, "So-and-so has insulted me," considering this a sufficient punishment for such a person. The same man also restrained his friends when they wished to punish the insulter, saying, "If a donkey had kicked me, would I have kicked back?"

5. Such were the responses of those ancient philosophers to those who mocked them. For us, it would not be unfitting to hold such an opinion even without these examples, for the wisdom of God teaches us a far greater and more divine forbearance. For He commands us not only to bear insults in silence but even to offer the other cheek to the one who strikes us on the right. With these things in mind, we care nothing for the opinions of men. We are concerned with other matters. Let those who hunger for such opinions, as if they had never tasted them, take care—seizing them by every means, even if it requires killing, and thus dishonoring themselves twice over. But why should those who continually fix their gaze on our Lord Jesus—who is Master, Benefactor, Overseer of wisdom and truth, and who came to save—need any other help? For He, the Creator of us and the whole world, has been wronged in words and deeds, not only as proclaimed in the Scriptures but also as understood by the mind, apart from the surpassing measure of patience in Him who knew these things before the ages and came for this purpose. We marvel and are astonished. Those who care to consider such things beat their breasts and heads, touched by the understanding of the great judgments of God. And while the whole multitude believed, worshipped, and followed, those attached to this life were exact examiners and judges of the truth. But the chief priests and scribes slandered, reviled, and killed. For since it was necessary, by the foreordained plan of God's love for mankind, that men be saved in this way, and since the human nature of Jesus had to be killed, it was also necessary for scandals to arise. And it was necessary for some disciple to be found who would make the common salvation a byproduct of his own wickedness. It was necessary for those who would say, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die," to be unable to bear the reproofs of their own madness. Therefore, at first, Jesus presided over them as His own children, but later, though unwilling, He applied the fitting name they had chosen, calling them children of their father, the devil, for they had exchanged the true Father for him in their works. Thus, it was necessary then for such instruments of wickedness to exist, through which the power of virtue would be revealed even unto death—and such a death! It was necessary for others to mourn and lament, to be encouraged by good hopes, and to be prepared for the service of proclaiming salvation. It was necessary for some, out of love of life, to deny Him, even though they had previously promised not to deny Him even if it meant death. The same things must now happen at the culmination of good things, as in a circle, just as they happened at the beginning, and with greater sharpness, as is fitting. For no one is ignorant of what has been foretold concerning the last times, in which we have been numbered as the last of the last. Therefore, it is said that the one who then opposed the source of good and orchestrated the plot against Him will appear in the last days, as if gaining strength in the old age and end of good things. For even then he was in the world, as the divine Apostle says, and he spared no evil against the disciples of Christ, nor has he ceased from then until now. Who was it that deprived Christian souls of the judgment and tongue of the golden John? Bishops

were his collaborators, and with thirty or more charges, they sought to tear down the pillar of the Church. Wretched men, they fought against the divine and unalterable decrees with great shamelessness. Who was it that killed the blessed Flavian, using Dioscorus as his instrument? But in the last days, as I have said, it is necessary for him, as if rejuvenated and employing such souls—those who run before they are called—to leave nothing undone of what he is naturally inclined to do, or rather, what he has chosen to do. For from the beginning, he was inclined to think and do the worst. Not only did our Lord permit wickedness to advance then for the sake of the progress of His plan, but He also made Himself an example of true philosophy for those who would follow Him to the end. For He says, "Unless you strive to emulate My disregard for all human things, even life itself, you cannot be My disciples, but will be mere pretenders, falsely adorned with the seal of My mark." Therefore, let every thoughtful person calm the turmoil in their mind by remembering Jesus and, in the face of human abuse, neither grieve nor even rejoice, nor be troubled by those who unjustly mistreat them, even if no reward for endurance is in sight.

6. If, therefore, David, great among prophets and kings, prayed thus to God and called himself by such names, who will grieve henceforth when unjustly reviled? If our Lord, the giver of the law, was executed as a lawbreaker, and the chief priests passed such a sentence; if they boldly wove such slanders against the truth and did not fear divine justice, what is surprising if now they unjustly mistreat the servants of Christ—I mean those whose honors they have seized and against whom they have waged war? For they have nothing to take from us, and they can neither punish us as sinners nor reward us as righteous. They merely adorn us with such crowns of thorns. Therefore, we judge that we ought not even to open our mouths against them for these reasons. But we do this much: to those who love us according to God, we reveal the calmness of our reasoning, in which, with David as our guide in this attitude toward insults, we enjoy, by God's gift, peace in our souls. And we sit, justifying God and giving thanks for this gentle instruction. For having submitted ourselves to the goodwill of our wretched race after the third age—or rather, having been subjected to them as they relentlessly pressed us to care for them—and having endured all things for Christ, though not with a very clear necessity or encouragement from Him, we undertook greater things than we were capable of, desiring even the impossible. For we did not rightly distinguish between the preparation of Paul and others like him for such things and our own inadequacy, nor between their time and ours. For then it was a time of the choosing of souls and the increase of faith, to put it simply; but now it is a time of the fearful apostasy of souls and heavenly abandonment, justly covering our race. And so it happened that we could neither benefit those least deserving of it nor avoid harming ourselves—not by sharing or agreeing with their ways (for then we would not have been reviled), but by grieving, being troubled, and suffering with the souls they were destroying, and in countless other ways. For as the number of good men decreases under the onslaught of misfortunes, the worse men prevail and grow stronger. And as we yield to their evils, we risk being swept away with them instead of saving them, and we prefer to save some good by such concessions rather than stubbornly allowing all to perish. Little good arose from our efforts, though with God and His preparations, we could have accomplished much—if only all had obeyed. But few saw what was being achieved, and fewer still gave thanks for it. Some even repaid our labors with the opposite, I mean those in the sacred order who had taken their positions out of a lack of good men or even seized them. For those outside, who impassively observed our struggles, neither our aim nor our work escaped them. They rejoiced in our successes but

lamented the failure of greater things, knowing that it was due to the baseness of others who neither obeyed nor resisted us.

7. Therefore, it is necessary for us, in despair of the common good, to seek our own gain henceforth and to fulfill the sacred saying: "Come out from among them and be separate." We, enchanted by the needs of the more devout and strongly compelled by our own unworthiness, often became entangled in their affairs, and though we withdrew hastily, we were drawn back again. And so, with the increase of common misfortunes, God's discipline has also increased for us. For some to now finally stand with the truth and what is beneficial, leaving no evil unaccomplished, was a sign of the common abandonment of all. But to include us in their concession to us, with shamelessness toward God, was a sign of their yielding to us. Those who mind their own business and only quietly lament the common misfortunes would not be kicked by anyone. Therefore, having at last condemned our untimely compassion, we began to seek and discern the divine will. And it was this: to come out from among them and be separate, according to the saying. For a whole year, we knocked pitifully at the divine door, and God assisted us in ways known to Him. Glory to His mercy. And now we examine our own life, with His help, having no common matter with any man. To those who love us according to God, this suffices to explain our silence toward them and to reveal this threefold disposition of ours.

8. But You, O Christ the King, the hope of our salvation, send comfort to Your servants who are troubled, and the only consolation that remains to them, which You have established through us, the least of Your servants, as You have willed—though it is now almost entirely gone. I speak of the Church, which appears poor to all those outside but is otherwise radiant, if governed by pious souls. Strengthen it, if possible, in many ways, but most of all, since it has been darkened and breathes its last due to a lack of virtue and knowledge—indeed, even of a humble and sound conscience. For when You come, You will find faith in the souls, even if it is very small, but those who through their actions hasten its destruction press upon it. Grant them awareness of themselves and of what they have done against You and Your love, for they have truly gone mad. And if they truly repent, surely You, the most loving and kind, will show them mercy. For while we were still sinners, You died for us. You did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, nor did You come to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through You. Therefore, forgive them if they repent. And they will repent if they loosen the cords of their iniquities, which they have woven together after being abandoned by You, because they desired to be governed by their own passions rather than by Your light. Whether they intend to repent or not, establish Your Church for Your servants, who are terribly tossed about on the waves, upon the anchors of Your mercy. And what I foretold, fearing it from the ingratitude of Your children as Your light enlightened me, may it not happen now, nor may I see it in my lifetime. Endure still, O longsuffering King, the folly of Your children. As for me, Your worm, the end of my life, whatever You decree, will be most sweet, if You command it, even if it comes quickly, and it will seem even sweeter, whether nature serves or a robber or slanderer brings it about. Thinking thus about the end, what should I ask for concerning this brief life, which You will give even to one who remains silent, as is Your custom? Therefore, I ask only this of You: deliver my soul from the guilt of many transgressions—I mean those which You alone know, not those for which the poor accuse us. For what we have done for the common good under Your guidance are rather Your righteous deeds and the gifts of Your grace, the unalterable judgments of Your light, unseen only by unlearned souls who thrust the sword against themselves

and distort them. Therefore, lead my soul forth pure and free, as You received the soul of the thief with a single word, though he had sinned for many years. And if, for such purification and to attain Your love in this way, the reproach of men—whether justly or unjustly given—must assist me, then love me thus, O Christ the King, and let the whole world hate me. † Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.

X. On the Difference Between Venial and Mortal Sins.

† A concise and clear explanation of the distinction between forgivable and mortal sins.

1. A more precise discussion of mortal and venial sins would require many books to fully expound and wiser ears to comprehend. However, since now even the most basic understanding of these matters is largely unknown due to lack of inquiry, we will provide a clear and concise explanation to assist those in need. Just as bodily illnesses or wounds are either curable or incurable and fatal, so too are sins, which are illnesses or wounds of the soul: some are mortal, while others are forgivable and venial. By first clarifying what constitutes a mortal sin, the nature of venial sins will also become evident. In general, any action of a person in this life that destroys the principle of the twofold love owed to God and neighbor is a sin leading to death. For just as the body lives by the soul, so the soul lives by love, as the Apostle says: "We live spiritually by love." Therefore, just as the body is left dead when the soul departs, so too the soul dies when love departs—not naturally, for the soul is immortal by nature, but in its activity, by losing through such sin the hope of perfection and the life to come, which begins in this life and is perfected in the next. Hence, the Lord says that the entire law and the prophets depend on the two commandments of love: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself." For the goal of all divine law is to unite the human soul to God, which is love, according to the divine Apostle, and this is the ultimate end and desire. This union is achieved through love, which consists in keeping His commandments: "He who loves Me keeps My commandments." All commandments either prescribe love for God or conclude with love for neighbor, since every human action is directed either immediately toward God or immediately toward neighbor, and through the neighbor, toward God. When an action is formed by love, it is virtue; when deprived of love and thus turned away from God and neighbor, it is sin and wickedness.

2. Having defined sin leading to death, it follows that we must consider that whatever a person does in this life is either a thought, a word, or a deed, for through these three the human life here is carried out. Therefore, every virtue—that is, the fulfillment of the twofold love—and every vice—that is, the falling away from the twofold love—exists either in thought, word, or deed. Thus, the distinction between venial and mortal sins also passes through these three categories. Every mortal sin is either of the mind, the tongue, or the body, and likewise every venial sin. Since human actions are either perfected in the mind, where they first arise, or, beginning in the mind, are perfected in speech, or are perfected through the body, they reasonably take their form and name from the part in which they are perfected. Thus, some are called virtues or vices of the mind, others of speech, and others of action or the body. For this reason, every sin leading to death, as well as every venial sin, is either of the soul, the tongue, or the body. However, a sin of the body presupposes some sin in the tongue and the soul, and a sin of the tongue presupposes some sin in the soul, but not the reverse. Therefore, a sin that is naturally perfected through the body, if it is mortal—that is, a destruction of love—is mortal in the deed. If it does not progress to the deed but remains only in the tongue after arising from the mind, it is venial. Similarly, a sin perfected through the tongue is mortal in speech, but if it remains only in the mind, it is venial. A sin that can be perfected only in the soul is mortal only in the soul.

3. We must also distinguish sins of the mind. Since an evil and passionate thought begins in the soul with its initial assault, progresses as the intellect wrestles with the passion, and is perfected in consent, it is only in

consent that a sin of the mind becomes mortal. In the struggle or the initial assault, it is venial. For example, fornication first arises in the consent of the mind. Progressing and becoming manifest through speech, it is perfected in the body, at which point it becomes mortal according to its nature. For it destroys the divine love within us, making the members of Christ members of a prostitute, and by turning a person away from the love of God and His divine laws, it binds them to sensual and forbidden pleasure. Nevertheless, while it is mortal in the deed, it remains venial in the tongue and the mind. It becomes mortal in these as well when it is fulfilled through the body, for the death spreads from the body back to the tongue and the soul. At that point, the person has fully committed the sin and is fully dead. Similarly, lying or blasphemy arises in the mind and is perfected in the tongue, making it a mortal sin in speech but venial in the mind. Pride and envy, however, both arise and are perfected in the mind, and thus they are mortal only in the mind, provided they are perfected in consent. Therefore, two things constitute a mortal sin: the destruction of love for God, neighbor, or both, and the perfection of the sin in the part of the person where it is naturally perfected.

4. Having made these distinctions, it follows to consider that the love of God is sometimes separated in action from the love of neighbor, though not in disposition, while the love of neighbor, being according to the law, is never separated from the love of God. I do not mean that it is possible to love God in one matter and not love one's neighbor in another, for this is impossible. As the Apostle says, "He who says he loves God but hates his brother is a liar." Rather, I mean that some human actions fulfill only the love of God and not the love of neighbor in their specific form, such as fasting, chastity, and personal prayer. In these, the actors are moved solely by divine love. Almsgiving, however, as a direct fruit of love for neighbor, also fulfills the love of God, since the one who practices this virtue serves the law of God concerning almsgiving and in many other ways. But it suffices to say this much. Thus, almsgiving is greater than fasting because it is the perfection of twofold love, while fasting is of one love. Therefore, when a choice must be made, we are permitted to set aside the lesser virtue to fulfill the greater, if it is not possible to perfectly fulfill both at once. If we do not do this, we are not justified by fulfilling the lesser virtue but condemned for neglecting the greater, for we break fasting and prayer at times to fulfill almsgiving and righteousness, or another virtue connected to love for neighbor. The same reasoning applies to the sins opposed to these virtues. Gluttony, being opposed to fasting, is the destruction of one love, the love for God. Injustice or hardness of heart, being opposed to almsgiving, is the destruction of twofold love. Both are mortal in nature, but they are not equally weighted in the loss of the good of love, for the sin that destroys twofold love is heavier. In general, sins against one's neighbor are weightier than those directly against God, not only because, as stated, the love of God is sometimes separated from the love of neighbor in a single action, while the love of neighbor always presupposes the love of God, but also because, when a person repents and turns from the love of sin to divine love, the destruction of love for God is easily healed by God's goodness in a short time and with simple remedies. The destruction of love for neighbor, however, is not easily healed. For while divine goodness looks only to the repentance of the sinner, who hates sin and loves God with fervent works of love, divine justice, as the overseer of sins against one's neighbor, looks not only to this but also to the satisfaction of the wronged party. "The blood of your brother cries out to Me," says the Lord. Therefore, it is impossible for one who has wronged a neighbor to receive forgiveness upon repentance unless they first satisfy the wronged party, restoring what was taken with added compensation, either to the living person, their relative, or their soul. If time does not permit this, or if the wrongdoer lacks the means, or if the

wronged party has died with no relatives, or if the wrongdoer is impoverished, then there remains only to knock on the door of God's goodness and not despair. Almsgiving, however, does not absolve the guilt of stealing what belongs to others when it is possible to restore it. But when the destruction of love for neighbor is healed by restoring what was wrongfully taken in one of the ways mentioned, then the accompanying destruction of love for God is healed by almsgiving. Indeed, all sins directly against God are healed by almsgiving, for almsgiving can restore the divine love we oppose in sinning. This is done out of God's great love for His children.

5. Next, it must be observed that in sins where the twofold love is violated, the destruction of one love precedes, and the other follows. For example, in adultery, the destruction of love for God precedes, for it is a sin of licentiousness by nature, like fornication, but it is joined by the violation of love for neighbor, as the most precious and intimate possession of the neighbor is stolen, and this possession is also sacred. In the theft of possessions, however, the opposite occurs: the destruction of love for neighbor precedes, and the destruction of love for God follows. This is true of all sins of greed and injustice, which are many in kind and form. In all these cases, the weight of the sin is judged not by the preceding lack of love but by the gravity of what is taken. Thus, a sin is greater when it deprives the neighbor of a greater good, whether this is done primarily or secondarily. It is also possible for one sin to be heavier than another in one respect but lighter in another. For example, stealing from others is heavier than drunkenness in kind, as it is a destruction of twofold love, yet in the order of sins, it is lighter than drunkenness. Stealing is the taking of what belongs to others out of a desire for more, while drunkenness, in its essence, is connected to all sins, for it can give birth to every kind of sin, as it is the strongest distraction of the intellect. While every sin involves a distraction of the intellect when it yields to passion and is defeated, this distraction is limited to one kind of sin or a few arising from the same root, and it is partly voluntary and partly involuntary. Drunkenness, however, is a complete distraction of the intellect, differing only in speed from the most severe madness, and thus it can produce sins of every kind. Moreover, it is entirely voluntary. One may desire beauty or wealth involuntarily if the passions are not fully subjected to reason, but one drinks to the point of drunkenness entirely willingly, driven not by natural inclination, as with other passions, but by irrational and base habit alone. Therefore, even if the sins committed in drunkenness are involuntary, as they occur in a complete distraction of the intellect—not merely defeated but destroyed—they are voluntary in their origin, since the distraction itself is voluntary. Again, slander is the destruction of a neighbor's honor, while murder is the destruction of their life. Both involve the destruction of twofold love, but murder is simply heavier than slander because it is a sin of action, not speech, and because the murderer cannot restore life to the victim, while the slanderer can restore honor to their brother by openly confessing their falsehood and making amends through their own humiliation and condemnation. However, slander is heavier than murder in one respect, though not for all people, but only for the serious-minded, who value honor more than life and thus are deprived of a greater good when wronged, making their injury heavier and their grief greater.

6. Not only are sins of different kinds or types judged to be heavier or lighter, as has been said, but the same type of sin also varies according to the circumstances connected with it, becoming heavier or lighter when compared in different situations. For example, a slanderer sins more gravely if they act out of suspicion rather than confirmed knowledge of their neighbor's faults; if they slander many rather than one; if they slander a ruler rather than a private individual; if they speak of greater rather than lesser faults; if they act out

of envy rather than defense; and if they slander a benefactor rather than an ordinary person. Similarly, a murderer sins more gravely if they kill willingly rather than unwillingly; if they kill with their own hands rather than through others; if they kill someone who did not initiate a conflict rather than one who did; if they kill someone who did not resist rather than one who did; if they strike many blows rather than one; if they kill a ruler rather than a private individual; and if they kill a good person rather than an evil one. If the victim is a private individual, the sin is heavier if they are the head of a household rather than a solitary person; if they are young rather than old; if their parents are still alive rather than deceased; if they are an only child rather than one with siblings; if their family is poor rather than wealthy; if they are a consecrated person rather than a layperson; and if the murder occurs in a holy place rather than on the road. Likewise, a fornicator sins less if they are unmarried and consort with another unmarried person, which is properly called fornication, but more gravely if they are unmarried and consort with a married woman, and even more gravely if they are married and consort with another married woman, which is called adultery. The sin of licentiousness is further varied in its gravity by the nature, relationship, rank, or age of the persons involved, as well as by the motive, frequency, place, or time of the sin. The most common variation, which applies to all sins, is the difference in the sinner themselves. In every sin, a younger person sins less gravely than an older one, an unlearned person less than a learned one, and a person of lower rank less than one of higher rank, whether in secular or ecclesiastical order.

7. This much suffices to outline and guide those who wish to explore further the differences among mortal sins in terms of their relative gravity. From this, it is also clear what a venial sin is. For if a mortal sin is one in which love for God or for both God and neighbor is destroyed, a venial sin is one in which this love is not destroyed. An example is adultery in the heart alone, arising from looking at a woman with the intent to desire her in the heart. For the intent to look with desire unsettles love for God but does not expel it from the soul, as does adultery in deed. Similarly, idle talk, while it does not destroy love like slander, diminishes the perfection owed to it, for we are commanded to speak only what builds up our neighbor. Envy that troubles the soul over a neighbor's good fortune without intense grief or hatred, which is properly called jealousy, is also venial. So too is anger stirred up in jest, not to harm but to play, and playful lies. The beginnings of sins that would be mortal in deed are also venial if their completion is willingly restrained out of love, so that the sinner is not further unsettled and killed by the completion of the sin. Likewise, the neglect of due penance or reparation for sins, resulting from a lukewarm return to divine love, is venial. All these are forgiven, even without satisfaction, by the goodness of God. The Church has also provided for them through God's provision: for the living, through the mystery of confession; and for the dead, through the customary prayers offered for all who have departed. Repentance, however, is the most effective remedy for mortal sins, provided it is true and firm, consisting of contrition, confession, and satisfaction. When death approaches or some other necessity prevents confession and satisfaction, true contrition of the heart suffices. For just as ancestral and natural sin is cleansed by the mystery of baptism, so actual sins are cleansed by the mystery of repentance. When these are forgiven, all the good things lost through sin are restored. When sin is active, a person becomes an enemy of God, for it is impossible to be a friend of both sin and God. But when they cease to sin, the enmity is immediately dissolved through repentance, and just as they became God's enemy by loving sin, so they return to His friendship by hating sin. The Lord immediately turns to those who turn to Him. The stain of sin, however, is erased by satisfaction, and no multitude or magnitude of sins is beyond

forgiveness through true repentance, which immediately dissolves enmity by turning away from sin and cleanses the stain through satisfaction, either in this life or later through the Church's remedies. But one who dies in the act of mortal sin must depart not only with the stain of sin but also with enmity and death, having fallen irrevocably and thus excluded from eternal life. Therefore, those who have never committed a mortal sin are most blessed, as they have never tasted death. Those who have repented of mortal sins in this life are also blessed, as they have been restored to life by their zeal and God's love, and are therefore called "the redeemed" in a special sense. But those who die unrepentant in mortal sins are most wretched, being dead both here and hereafter due to their own folly.

8. These things have been generally noted concerning mortal and venial sins. That the roots of all sins are seven—pride, envy, anger, sloth, greed, gluttony, and lust—and how many types each has, how many branches of sins spring from them, all bringing death to the soul of those deceived by them until they strive to be restored through true repentance, we will briefly explain for you and through you for those who will benefit. The first general sin is pride. It is the beginning of every sin, and from it specifically spring these fruits of vice: disobedience, boastfulness, hypocrisy, lack of self-control, stubbornness, division, and innovation. The disobedient are those who refuse to obey their superior or anyone greater. The boastful are those who boast and seek attention. The hypocrite is one who does good deeds for the sake of others, not for God. The self-indulgent are those insatiable for praise. The stubborn are those who insist on their own way and cannot bear correction. The divisive are those who are opinionated and refuse to agree with what others do or say well. The innovator is one who meddles in what does not concern them, claiming the works and words of wiser men as their own and boasting of them as if they were their own. Pride has four forms: first, failing to give thanks to God properly for His blessings but thinking they come from oneself; second, thinking they come from God but are a reward for one's own works; third, thinking one has what one does not; fourth, despising equals or betters for these things and striving to appear uniquely good. Both the fruits and forms of pride are mortal. The second general sin is envy. Its fruits are hatred of one's brother, gossip, slander, joy in a neighbor's troubles, and grief at their good fortune. All these bring death to the soul. A gossip is properly one who stirs up strife by spreading rumors. The third sin is anger, about which it is said, "The anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God." Its fruits are strife, swelling of the mind (when one fears retaliation not out of fear of God but of authority and thus inwardly plots various ways of revenge), insult, shouting, indignation (bitterness of face), and blasphemy. Grudges are anger that has lasted a long time. The fourth general sin is sloth. Its fruits are laziness (when one, weary of being urged to spiritual good, devises evil against the one urging them and hates them), quarrelsomeness (indignation and bitterness), faintheartedness, despair, numbness to the commandments, and wandering of the mind to useless or unlawful things. From this wandering come inopportune actions, confusion of the mind, meddlesomeness, excessive talking, restlessness of the body (disorderly movement in one place), and instability (disorderly movement from place to place). The fifth sin is greed or covetousness, which is also called idolatry, since the greedy love and serve money as the polytheists once served their idols, which they called gods. Its fruits are betrayal (when one acquires wealth through deceit or harm to family or neighbors), deceit (when one hides the truth about goods being sold, concealing their defects so they appear more useful or beautiful than they are and are sold above their just price), fraud (when intermediaries deceive both parties for their own gain), perjury, turmoil of the mind, violence (theft), hardness of heart toward mercy. Its offspring are extortion,

usury, bribery, and theft of private, public, or sacred property. The sixth sin is gluttony, which is also called idolatry, for it is said of the gluttonous, "Whose god is their belly." Its fruits are untimely joy and sorrow, jesting, impurity, excessive talking, and dullness of the mind in understanding. It has five forms: first, eating before the appointed time and eating or drinking constantly without good reason or necessity; second, preparing food beyond one's means or station; third, eating excessively beyond need; fourth, preparing dishes with elaborate sauces and seasonings to indulge in the pleasure of eating; fifth, eagerly and greedily devouring food like a wolf. Drunkenness is also a form of gluttony. The seventh sin is lust. Its fruits are blindness of the mind, recklessness, instability, ruin, self-love, hatred of God, love of this world, and fear and despair of the future. It has six forms: fornication, adultery, rape (the abduction of virgins), sacrilege, incest, and unnatural sins, each of which has many variations and types.

9. It should be known that some sins are connected to multiple general sins. For example, murder is a great injustice, depriving a neighbor of the greatest thing they have—their life—and overturning God's creation, making the act a fight against God. Its primary cause is anger, but it is also connected to other general vices, such as envy, greed, gluttony, or lust. Similarly, false testimony arises primarily from greed but is sometimes connected to anger, envy, or lust. So too with perjury. Adultery is by nature lust but is also connected to greed, for it is a form of theft—hence such persons are called "thieves of marriage." Theft arises primarily from greed but is connected to envy, gluttony, or lust, as well as idleness and sloth, since thieves steal either to satisfy their stomach, indulge in lust, or avoid work, having no means of their own. It should also be known that these seven passions and their fruits are destroyed or healed by the opposing virtues and their fruits. Pride is opposed by humility and modesty; envy by brotherly love and love of truth; anger by gentleness and patience; sloth by diligence, endurance, and stability; greed by fairness and contentment; gluttony by sobriety and self-control; and lust by the subjugation of desires and purity. Universal remedies for falling into sin are contrition of the heart in awareness of one's fall, humility in thought and deed, endurance of voluntary and involuntary trials with a view to divine love, and compassion for one's brothers in soul and deed according to one's ability. Through these, a person returns fully to divine love and receives not only forgiveness of sins but also grace. And glory to the infinite goodness of our Lord forever. Amen.

EXHORTATION TO A SINNER (FRAGMENT)

XI. Exhortation to a Sinner. Fragment.

† ……

1. ……And I will give you some gentle advice. Do not neglect the evening hymn. Offer the morning praises to Him who brings forth the light for you. Participate in the most holy gathering of the mystical liturgy, and perhaps you will not be among those rejected by God, just as those who delayed until the eleventh hour out of laziness were not excluded from the work. This advice is not burdensome, for it asks only for those parts of the day that you otherwise spend on things of little use to you. In the evening, you already rest from your labors on the Sabbath, and it is no great loss to take a little time from your rest to attend church, dedicating a small portion of time to God. In the morning, you often spend time in bed at home, and it is not difficult to rise and walk to church. The time for the mystical liturgy and the sacred gathering coincides with the hour of lunch and the bodily meal. The interval between the spiritual and physical tables is perhaps no more than an hour. This is the time you should set aside before your meal to be with God. Pause from your worldly cares and give yourself to the mystical table of the Lord, and the enjoyment of your physical meal will be sweeter, seasoned with the spiritual salt of the Church and the fear of God. For when the spiritual table precedes the physical, it tempers excess and indulgence with the sweetness of spiritual food, still fragrant with divine grace. I do not know if anything could be more delightful to a rational mind. If someone, due to inexperience, is unaware of the joy of partaking in this table, let them be persuaded by this advice and, after briefly breaking free from the constant habit of sinful neglect, taste its sweetness. They will then know by experience the grace proclaimed to them, shining more brightly in the reality itself. I believe they will not bear to be deprived of such great grace hereafter. Only let the one who partakes of the table in the Church attend to themselves, and not, while standing bodily within the church, let their mind and tongue wander outside to the games and distractions of life. For it is as if they are not present at all, or even worse, they seem to despise the gathering, which no one in this world would tolerate, much less the King of heaven, to whom alone we must devote ourselves with all holiness and purity of thought, offering the worship owed to Him and desiring to unite with Him through the activity of the rational soul. For when standing before the heavenly King and wishing to share His table, one must lift their mind from the earth and earthly things to the heights of heaven. Even when partaking of the physical meal, one must begin with prayer and thanksgiving, if it is to be fitting for a rational being. Otherwise, if the meal is devoid of the memory and fear of God, if all thanksgiving and hymnody are absent, and if instead there is much worldly contempt, indulgence, gluttony, and drunkenness, laughter instead of thanksgiving, drinking songs, dances, and games, and the witty obscenities of jesters—these are the solemnities of the indulgent, in which the inventor of evil delights—such a table cannot be called fitting for a rational being, for it is full of irrationality and must be avoided by all who have a mind, since the fear of God flees from it. Let those who give themselves to the spiritual table receive it spiritually, nourishing the soul no less than the body with the memory, meditation, and recounting of the delights of the Church, which participation in the mystical table grants. You must by all means not neglect this, attending church on the appointed day of the Lord and dedicating yourself to God as much as possible, improving yourself through participation in and communion with the divine.

EXHORTATION TO A SINNER (FRAGMENT)

2. It would be terrible, indeed most terrible, if, being required and obligated to dedicate this entire day of the week to God, you do not give even a small portion of it to Him. While you justly devote all your life to the cares of life and the care of your body, to God and the higher and better part of your being—your soul—you do not allot even a fraction of the whole, or rather, of this one day out of seven. You count countless days that will never come, exceeding the measure of life allotted to you. For it is not in your power to set the bounds of life and death as you wish, or to take any thought of repentance before the end comes. Death will come unexpectedly, when you least expect it, and send you to the place prepared for you according to the worth of your life here. Then you will repent, but it will be in vain, as your soul is forcibly separated from your body, unable to enjoy even a moment for correction. O man, know yourself—who you are and for what purpose you were brought into this life. You are a being composed of body and soul: the body is perishable, dissolvable, and corruptible, soon to return to the elements from which it was formed, for such is the nature of all composite and dissolvable things. The soul, though separated from the body (for it is separable), remains in itself indissoluble, incorruptible, and immortal. For these qualities belong to bodies, but the soul is not a body; it is the cohesive and life-giving principle of the body, bound to it as if in a prison, even if it greatly loves the body and, as it were, forgets its own nature. When released from the body, it remains what it is—a rational, intellectual, and immortal substance, awaiting the resurrection of the dead, so that it may be reunited with the body and receive the recompense for its life from Him who justly measures each one's worth. For man does not remain in this life forever but uses it as a path to that future and endless restoration, equipping himself here for that dwelling place. Such, O man, is your nature, created for the glory of the God who made you, not for rejection, and for the enjoyment of heavenly goods, not for the possession of hell. While your body has the earth as its dwelling and home, your soul must be lifted to the heavenly realm and contemplate its beauties and wonders with the power of the mind—dimly and imperfectly now, but more brightly and perfectly after death, when what is partial is done away with, and you are made worthy of yourself and your Creator.

3. But you behave so unworthily toward yourself and your Creator, living only by the senses like the irrational animals, and no longer by reason and intellect, which is the true and natural life of a rational being. You care for your body in ways that have nothing to do with reason, lavishing all possible care on it, even beyond your means, to ensure that nothing is lacking for its comfort. Yet you give no thought at all to your soul. Thus, you care for yourself only in part, unworthy of the dignity of immortality and rationality granted to you, living only half a life and neglecting the other half entirely. You show no concern for the more precious part, which is truly man, but devote all your care to the less precious, or rather, to what is not precious in itself except because of the soul united to it. This is not man himself but rather belongs to man (for man is properly the living soul), yet it becomes the sole object of your care. You leave your soul wholly sick, almost dead (if one may speak of the soul's death, which I believe is the state of sin leading to the brink of destruction, unless you wash it clean from the filth of total neglect). You do not even attempt to restore it to full health, nor even to revive it moderately. But if your body, or any part of it, even the smallest and least honorable, suffers, you employ every means and seek every physician to restore it to its former wholeness, even extending your care to hair and nails, which are signs of the body's death in living beings, being devoid of sensation. Your life is unlivable if you do not have a healthy and whole body, yet you are dead in the greater and more precious part of your being, and you live only in the lesser part—or rather, you seem to live,

having turned away from the proper and natural life. You carry about all your rational powers as if dead, allowing them no movement, and you act and move only by sensation, no differently from the irrational animals, which can enjoy nothing higher and live only by imagination and sensation, reaching for nothing beyond these, as they are not made to do so. For if they were made for higher things, they would not have fallen from their nature, just as now none of them changes for the worse. Thus, we are no better than the irrational animals, if not worse, since we excel in the higher and more glorious life by which we are united to the incorporeal natures and are called gods by grace. But when we willingly descend to the lower life, preferring the irrational to the rational, the sensual to the intellectual, and the corruptible to the pure, we abandon the proper order in which the Creator originally placed each being.

4. It is fitting, therefore, to say that we have completely ignored our own nature, having willingly fallen from reason into irrationality and living wretchedly with it, unaware of what we suffer. But let us wash ourselves, even if late; let us regain our senses; let us know ourselves; let us care for both body and soul; let us provide what is fitting for each. Let us heal bodily ailments with bodily remedies, and spiritual ailments with spiritual ones. Let us nourish the body with bodily food, and the incorporeal with the incorporeal. What else could nourish the incorporeal but saving words? Therefore, while nourishing the body with bodily things, let us also feast the soul with incorporeal and rational things. Let us entrust the body to the senses and clothe the soul with the intelligible. The covering of the soul is an intelligible light shining from the inaccessible light, illuminating its essence. From this, the body will also appear brighter, for when the soul is brightened, it will be joyful. As it is said, "When the soul rejoices, the face flourishes." We will speak more of the soul than of the body, for the soul does not exist for the sake of the body, but the body for the sake of the soul. The body is its instrument, cooperating in its activities. Every instrument exists for the sake of another, for the one who uses it, and for the end that the user aims at. Here, the end is the perfection of the intellect, for which the body is appointed as a cooperator. Therefore, let us not reverse this order within ourselves, nor let what exists for the sake of another—the body, that is—drag down the soul, which exists for its own sake, into its own lowliness and slavery. This would be like the slave rising above the master because the master has neglected his own duties. Let what is appointed to rule use its own nature, and the slave will never rise above it. The body is a cooperator, and the soul is appointed to cooperate with it. Therefore, let the soul command the body, as its ruler and as one who uses a cooperator for its own purposes, and the body will obediently obey as a cooperator and servant. Let the soul restrain the body's inclination toward lower things and draw it upward to higher things, or at least not allow it to drag the soul downward. The soul, which is by nature and duty always looking upward, must thus care for the body as a cooperator in its activities, not as a hindrance. Let it care for the body so that it does not hinder its own activities, for excess is not praiseworthy and is very dangerous, as it raises the material as an enemy against the spirit. Moreover, let the soul not be consumed by the body, for though their natures are necessarily opposed, they are united in the constitution of one living being, each remaining within its own bounds, even in their union and cooperation, without altering their opposition, though each influences the other, and they use each other's properties according to the principle of reciprocity. Let the soul imitate the more experienced horse trainers, who fatten their horses only to the point where they do not become unruly. When they begin to act arrogantly, the trainers reduce their food and thus curb their pride, using moderation thereafter. So too the soul should care for the body only to the point where it does not become insolent from excessive care. When it begins to grow arrogant from too much

indulgence, the soul must restrain its excess and make it obedient. Thus, the soul will be nourished, the body will be subdued, and man will glorify himself and his Creator by caring fittingly for both parts of his being, not neglecting one for the other, which is unbalanced, one-sided, and very dangerous.

5. It has been said that the nourishment of the soul is beneficial words, and its covering is an intelligible light. This is well said, for the incorporeal and spiritual must be nourished and clothed with what is fitting to its nature—something equally spiritual and incorporeal. The Church provides us with the most effective and abundant source of both. If someone were to bar you from the Church, shutting you out from its entrance, you would rightly consider it a terrible loss and lament it. But since no one prevents you, and you willingly inflict this injustice on yourself, bringing loss upon yourself, you are like those who trample on the sacred laws and do not even realize the severity of their condition, which admits no cure due to the insensitivity of the disease. This is the greatest loss imaginable, affecting the most vital things. Do you think it is a minor or tolerable offense to neglect what the Church provides for your correction, so that, embittered and recognizing your own folly, you might return and be received, having corrected your wickedness through repentance? Or, if you remain uncorrected, you would be utterly excluded from the holy assembly of the Church, not even deemed worthy of customary burial after death due to the depravity of your will. What pardon could you deserve, O man, when you foolishly condemn yourself to what you would justly consider a terrible injustice if inflicted by another? If you were moderately sensible, considering the magnitude of the loss and the shame and dishonor it brings, would you not think it better to act like those driven out by the Church, whose laws you trample, just as they do, by refusing to heed its call? Indeed, you are worse off than they, for their exclusion from the Church is partly involuntary, even if their sins are not, while you willingly bring that terrible condemnation upon yourself. By the great habit of this wicked neglect, you so dispose yourself that even if you later remember and wish to enter, the Church would justly deny you entrance, not recognizing you as one of its own. For the holy Church of God knows how to excommunicate and cut off from the communion of its members those who absent themselves from church for three consecutive Sundays, according to the sacred canons. Do you not tremble at the Church's judgment, willingly subjecting yourself to it through extreme neglect? Do you not pity yourself for your folly, especially since you absent yourself not just three times but often, or rather, almost your entire life? Or is it because the Church does not formally bar you, either unaware of your actions or mercifully sparing you, hoping that you will one day recognize your error and flee to her, who receives you maternally and heals you? Or is it because you exclude yourself through negligence, and thus the judgment does not seem like a judgment to you, nor the loss a loss, even though it is worse than the Church's formal exclusion? For while bodily loss ends with the body, the soul remains to bear eternal punishment for its sins. May you not experience this, but rather recognize the sickness of your soul and seek its proper healing. Know that you are afflicted with a disease that alienates you from God. The farther you stand from the Church, the farther you stand from the head of the Church, Christ, and you are no longer His member, nor does Christ our God draw near to you. For though God is near and is called the God who is near, it is to those who draw near to Him. But those who distance themselves and live in exile, as the Psalmist says, dwelling in deserts of worldly cares and pleasures, not receiving God who saves from faintness and storm—from these, even the omnipresent God stands apart, not because He is absent, for He fills all things, but because they cannot gaze at the light of His presence, having willingly blinded the eyes of their soul, like those whose physical eyes cannot bear the sun's rays.

EXHORTATION TO A SINNER (FRAGMENT)

6. Therefore, do not persist in the worst disease, which keeps you far from God, nor, like those insensible patients who, due to weakness or some involuntary mental derangement, keep themselves away from doctors, though they need them, place yourself willingly outside the healing Church, fleeing it as they flee doctors, thinking they do not need them because their minds are deranged and they do not realize they are sick. Come, then, to the Church that heals your soul's sickness, not as a side task but as your primary concern, not with the body alone but with the soul, not with worldly care but with spiritual diligence, and you will find great and indescribable healing. The eyes of your soul will be enlightened, and you will receive the brightness of the intelligible sun's rays. Your ears will be opened to the word of truth, and you will know the depths of the mysteries of the Spirit's wisdom. You will enjoy the sweetness of spiritual fragrance with the spiritual sense of smell. You will taste the sweetness of the Spirit's words. The bread that came down from heaven will be your food, strengthening and preserving you for eternal life. Every bodily sense will be sanctified, as purity flows from the soul to the body. The flesh will not rise against the soul, for its desires will be restrained and subdued by the spirit. All your members will be presented to God for sanctification. Every affliction will be driven away from you. Let the prophet David persuade you: "I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my troubles." And again: "The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and delivers them." Every joy will be given to you. David also says, "There is no want to those who seek the Lord," and again, "Those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good." Bodily sickness will not harm the dignity of your soul, or if it comes at all, it will be driven away by the power and grace of God, who receives your prayer like incense and patiently allows it for the hope of glory, as He works all things for good and permits the body to be afflicted so that the soul's activity may flourish, not being hindered by the body. Your life will improve, as all your work is guided by the abundant provision of the Lord who enriches and impoverishes, the former for righteousness, the latter for many sins, if we must believe Him who says, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." This will surely happen if you open your heart of compassion to those in need, for the Lord opens His hand and satisfies every living thing with favor. Thus, what you fear—that your wealth will diminish if you take time to attend church—will turn out the opposite. Your life and all your affairs will prosper more when you come to church and partake of its riches, seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

7. If, therefore, those who seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness also receive worldly goods, which they will manage worthily as gifts from Him, then surely those who do not seek it will lose even these. Thus, if someone, in seeking to secure their life, avoids the Church, they will achieve the opposite of what they desire, cutting themselves off from the very means of sustaining their life. Go, then, to the Church, seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and your earthly affairs will improve, as these things are added to your request for the kingdom, provided you use what is given to you rightly. Even if nothing is granted to you, or if you gain nothing more in this life according to the judgments of Him who works all things for good—judgments we should not scrutinize now—you still have a great, secure, and unassailable treasure in piety, which is more valuable than anything in this life. Piety is a heavenly matter and makes one worthy of heavenly goods. By leaving this as an inheritance to your children, wife, parents, and all your household, as is fitting, you will inspire them to emulate the prosperity of your piety, leaving them something more precious than all else. As you equip them for the heavenly inheritance, the Church will also be a guide and companion to your wife, teaching her modesty and chastity, which are most necessary and beneficial for

women and bring them great honor. The Church will also be the cause of good offspring for you, bearing and nurturing your children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Only show them from their first steps and earliest actions how to attend church. Accustom them from their tender years to stand within the holy assemblies. Let them lisp the words of the Church, not blasphemies. For what they hear, due to their tender and impressionable age, they will surely learn and imitate. Let them hear the words of the Spirit, not abusive language; let them be delighted by what pleases the sober-minded, not the foolish. And perhaps, as they grow, their zeal for what is good will increase with their spiritual progress, and the grace of piety will shine upon the flower of their youth and beauty, beautifully adorning the gray hairs of old age and fittingly preparing them for the life to come. You will also be……

8. For here, in the Church, our mind is nourished rationally and illuminated and enveloped by the divine light through the hearing of sacred words and teachings, and through participation in the mystical table, where the heavenly bread is offered, by which the soul is naturally nourished, enlightened, and transformed. Therefore, let each one of you, like a child nurtured by its mother—or rather, by something greater than a mother, since the Church is more beneficial—be nourished by the Church from childhood, if you are wise. Above all, dedicate yourself at all times to the Creator of the days, feeding yourself with the daily bread that is fitting for both parts of your nature, and thus engage in work, assured by the fullness of the soul that this daily bread will be provided to you without ceasing by Him who opens His hand and satisfies every living thing with favor. This is what we are now exhorting you to do, for He Himself has commanded and taught it, and daily requires it of us. Therefore, make it your habit to do this above all at all times. But if it is not possible due to the great negligence we all share, at least dedicate the day of resurrection, which is consecrated to the Lord, to Him. On this day, offer your prayers and all the thanksgiving and devotion owed to the Most High. This is the Lord's Day, for it is consecrated to the Lord—not to man, though it is also for man, since the entire mystery of the divine plan was accomplished for humanity. The other days are given to us for work, after we have first dedicated ourselves to the Creator and Master of the days and of ourselves. "For six days," He says, "you shall labor," but not in indulgence, licentiousness, or any other form of debauchery. The seventh day, which is also the first and is called the Lord's Day—the seventh as one of the seven, for each day that completes the week can be called the seventh, and the first not only as the beginning but also as the most honored because of the mystery of the divine plan and the resurrection accomplished on it—is consecrated to the Lord. This day, therefore, is dedicated to God, on which we must rest and come to know the Lord our God. "Be still," He says, "and know that I am God." Let us, therefore, rest from all worldly labor on this day and occupy ourselves with heavenly matters, approaching the spiritual table of the Church to feast our minds on what is meant to nourish the intellect. For in this way, we will come to know God, and in turn, we will be known by Him. "I will know you," He says, "as I have been known." How precious it is to know God and to be known by Him! It is not the same as being known by an earthly king, which many strive for and consider worth everything, even to the point of madness, nor is it comparable to the honor they are willing to give to this temporary and mortal king, who is their equal, as they give to the eternal King of kings and Creator of the ages. This knowledge surpasses all earthly knowledge; it transcends all nature and unites the one who seeks it with the blessed and transcendent nature of God. If, therefore, the knowledge of God is so great, let us draw near to Him and be enlightened, and our faces will not be put to shame. Let us seek the Lord, and He will hear us and deliver us from all our troubles. Let us draw near to

EXHORTATION TO A SINNER (FRAGMENT)

Him and bless Him, always carrying His praise in our mouths, and our soul will be praised in the Lord. For He does not need our blessing, being without need, but so that in blessing Him, we may be blessed by Him. Let us magnify the Lord together in the Church and exalt His name as one, and He will be in our midst, accepting our unity in His name, as it is written: "Where two or three are gathered in My name, there I am in their midst." Let us do this at all times, but especially on the day of resurrection, which is consecrated to the Lord. Therefore, let us bless Him and exalt His name together throughout this day—in the evening hymns, in the morning prayers, during the most mystical gathering, before and after it, and throughout the entire span of this Lord's Day. Let us spend our time in hymns, as has been said, in glorifying God, and in meditating on His words. Let us devote ourselves to good deeds and every other work of virtue, not to drunkenness, indulgence, gluttony, or any other debauchery. Let us dedicate everything to God, for all is consecrated to Him. But if you say it is not possible for you due to being too entangled in worldly affairs, I will condescend to your great negligence and insatiable worldly desires.

TO CONSOLATION (FRAGMENT)

XII. Letter of Consolation. Fragment.

† ……

1. ……Yet it is not entirely incurable or beyond all human and divine medicine, which is stronger and more powerful. God will comfort you, and love for Him above all else will sustain you. For if the innocence of friends and the presence and sight of loved ones make it easier to bear difficult events without distress, how much more can the God of mercies and Father of all consolation comfort your soul, imprinting in it images of His presence that lighten your burden? He Himself has allowed this trial, as He knows best. Consider that He oversees all things, discerns and tests the endurance of His servants ……through afflictions, and rewards them, while He is displeased with the ungrateful ……Through the Apostle, He exhorts us to give thanks in all circumstances, as we are His servants. Remember the many blessings He has bestowed on you from your youth until now, and you will be less troubled. Reflect on this above all: that soon, not one by one or in succession, but all at once, you will leave behind friends and relatives, and even your body like a garment, and your naked soul will depart to God……

2. ……You will no longer care for anything here, but your entire nature and meditation will be on God, the radiant……nature. You must kindle a warmer love for Him, who alone is our good, unassailable, and all-sufficient. You will steady your soul, tossed by the waves of grief, for every loss and misfortune seems lighter……when the dearest of all is present and shares in your suffering. Such is God, who is our Father, Mother, Brother, food, drink, shelter, and all that is most beautiful, surpassing every beauty. For the dearest of human beings are neither self-sufficient—each is sweet only when accompanied by others—nor do they provide lasting joy. While they are present, they are more than a dream, for they are real, but in their unreliability and the swiftness of change, they differ little from dreams. If they do differ, it only adds to the bitterness that follows. For while they are still present, the fear of losing them consumes us, and when they are taken from us, they leave us in pain, and the idols of habit torment us thereafter. Thus, earthly things are worse than dreams, for their joy is unstable and fleeting, while their sorrow is real and lasting, unlike the fleeting images of sleep. No one in their right mind grieves upon waking from a happy dream. But God is always with us, as is evident, and He is all-sufficient for us, and when we depart, He is no less present—indeed, more so, or rather, we will be with Him, and others have gone before us. Therefore, keep Him in mind, and you will have sufficient comfort.

3. Your knowledge will console you, for you are the best physician for such great illnesses. God has given us a certain power over all grief and joy, if we will it. This power is much greater and more effective in the wiser through practice, against these irrational passions. You, by nature and practice, are most wise, as God has granted you this exceptional gift.

4. Third, the common misfortune will console you. For if the presence of many who sympathize out of goodwill brings great comfort to the sufferer, how much more will it ease and relieve you when you see many—indeed, almost all—falling into similar misfortunes. Such a person will philosophize about their own troubles, not rejoicing that others suffer the same, nor making personal gain from common misfortunes, but rather, as the saying goes, the greater sorrow will dim the lesser. For while every personal evil, as personal, is worse for each individual, since they bear all its bitterness alone, in the judgment of reason, the common

TO CONSOLATION (FRAGMENT)

misfortune appears far more severe, because it harms many and because the common misfortune becomes the personal evil of each. Therefore, many have given their children to death and……even becoming their own executioners. Some have even taken their own lives to save their homeland, exchanging personal misfortune for common prosperity. Thus, the common misfortune……just as they can bear their own. You see every age struck by death (?), entire households emptied. The whole city is filled with tears; it is overwhelmed by misfortunes like yours. Some are sick and will soon die; others are dying; some are carried out; others are buried; and so many have suffered that even wars would not have killed so many, whether it befell a city……under siege……for ages, and everything is full of tragedies, and terror and shock grip all the living, who do not know what they will suffer or which of these evils will spare them. For no one can guarantee to stop the force of the fire consuming everything……or the sword that reaps every age without mercy. The city has lost its defenders. We will serve the debt of nature, some sooner, others later, for the hope of succession is gone……Therefore, you have all your fellow citizens sharing your grief doubly, both because they share in your misfortune and because each suffers the same as you. Reflecting on this, O man of God and noble nature, resist the force of grief as much as you can. As a brief aside to this discourse, let me say a little about this bitter and incurable snatching away of the living, for you and those present……and perhaps it is not a mere aside to consider this, either simply or in addition to the present need……

5. Many say many things about this……I, for my part, first know that God uses nature against the natural. Sometimes He floods the earth with an overwhelming deluge of water; other times He sets it ablaze, allowing the force of fire to consume whatever He wills. At other times, He makes the earth barren, wishing to kill the guilty with famine. Thus, He also permits the air to become corrupt among those whom He has condemned to this pitiful and violent death, just as He sends locusts, caterpillars, and all kinds of crop-destroying pests, turns water into blood, raises up hostile neighbors, sows civil strife, sets wicked tyrants over the hearts of the ruled, takes away counsel, sends famine to hear the word of God—the worst of all famines—and removes the wise, snatches away prudent counselors. Why enumerate all the works of divine justice, which pursues the wicked and unjust in various ways? For I would not say these are works of anger, since the divine is without anger. When we see the signs of anger, we simply call them the judgment and punishment of God. If, therefore, in all these things nature serves its Creator, and everything that appears is from nature, we will not for that reason entrust everything to nature. For this is the heaviest part of the present misfortune: that we dare to exclude God's justice and providence from human affairs and justify ourselves as unaccountable. We refuse to see the true cause, that we are being chastised for our sins. Instead, we busy ourselves with other causes and examine the circumstances of evil connected to this misfortune, unable to discern the truth (how could we?), since it comes from divine justice, which works in many ways, finally raising up a spontaneous movement of the elements, which we ultimately attribute to nature, not even considering that what happens by nature has come to human knowledge gradually, while this evil, which surpasses all human skill and art, has its origin elsewhere. But even if a plague spreads from city to city through some contagion, when the air is incidentally corrupted—not primarily, and partially, not entirely (?)—even this does not escape divine justice. For if they suffer this because they were unprepared, their failure to guard against the approaching danger is a loss of counsel or the greatest of God's punishments. But if, despite all precautions, they cannot escape harm, then it is clearer that this happens by divine justice to those who err. For if the Lord does not guard the city, the watchman stays awake in vain, whether against enemies

or any other evil. I do not say this on my own authority but have taken it from Scripture, which says that people sometimes die when divine justice strikes. I pass over other examples, but in one of the prophetic books (I will not name it or the passage), wishing you to diligently seek such things, it is written: "As the Lord lives, unless the Lord strikes him, or he goes to war, or his day comes and he dies, I will not strike him." The passage distinguishes three ways of life and death among men: first, the coming of his day signifies the inevitable death that comes to all men, which we call natural, when the elements have sufficiently governed the body according to the laws of nature, and no one can pass through it a second time. Second, going to war signifies all voluntary death, for wars arise from our will, whether we attack others out of greed or defend ourselves against attackers out of refusal to yield. Most men perish daily through anger and desire: some in shipwrecks, others at the hands of robbers, the robbers themselves when handed over to the law, thieves, those who break into their neighbors' houses—whatever kind of breaking in you will. For all such are led by some desire or anger to leave this life prematurely, though they might have lived longer if they had chosen to act wisely and avoid danger. Third, the phrase "unless the Lord strikes him" signifies death by divine stroke, which often comes for the good of those it strikes, as it comes from God's portion. "For he was taken away," it says, "lest evil change his understanding, or deceit deceive his soul." If, therefore, someone dies seemingly by his own will, divine justice was driving him to the destruction that his deeds deserved, though this is hidden from most, and this is rightly said and strongly supports the present argument. Scripture divides death into three kinds, which it says can occur: by God's striking, by destruction, or by some other name—the utter destruction of the firstborn and the Egyptians in the Red Sea, drowned instead of the others who were to be saved; the destruction of the Sodomites; the catastrophe averted from the Ninevites if they had not quickly repented; and all the other sufferings that come upon men from divine wrath, as many call it, or as I call it, the work of divine justice for salvation, for it cuts off wickedness and destroys it both in those who perish and in those who remain, and in those who observe the sufferings of their neighbors and are prompted to correct their own evils……

6. But never has the judgment of God, nor even that of men, brought the plague upon us. Now, the destruction caused by the plague has truly come from God, and justly so; for it is in complete harmony with the other scourges of God, through which we are chastised, or rather punished. To put it another way, this plague corresponds to our other evils. If someone should wonder why I have called our evils and punishments the work of God, let them seek an explanation from me, and they will receive it. I believe, however, that this is evident to those who have even a slight knowledge of divine matters. Yet, it is not my place to discover, demonstrate, or enumerate the common evils. I would scarcely be able to describe my own wickedness,……and difficult to wash away. This much, however, I know well and testify to all: even if you do not improve in all things, for all things are now in a bad state and……There will come a time when this present chastisement will seem a great act of divine love, and before long, it will be otherwise impossible—unless I am mad in misinterpreting the divine oracles. These things, then, I have briefly stated concerning the plague.

7. And to you, as I have already said, O most noble soul, may divine longing, innate knowledge, and our common misfortune both now and hereafter bring comfort. For this act of ours is more a demonstration of friendship and a repayment of debt, both to the departed and to you, the father—or rather, to the fatherland—a repayment of an inescapable debt, since the same misfortune is mine as well as the fatherland's, and since

TO CONSOLATION (FRAGMENT)

I mourn for its calamity. And fearing for the future, I stir your minds to propitiate divine justice, through which better things will one day come to those who have done well, for God is more ready to do good and to speak than we are.

VARIOUS THOUGHTS

XIII. Various Thoughts.

† Chapters of Gennadios Scholarios, Patriarch of Constantinople, very beneficial:

1. To labor diligently in sin creates a certain habit in the soul. For when a passion of the soul grows old and is confirmed over time by the practice of evil, it becomes difficult to heal, or even entirely incurable, as the habit often transforms into nature. It is therefore worthy of prayer not to touch evil at all, for the prominence of evil attracts many of the easily swayed into similar zeal.

2. The irrational impulses of the licentious, their mad and frenzied desires, are called "pangs" because they arise in the soul with sharpness and pain. According to such impulses, the one who does not gain mastery over evil thoughts conceives pain, and the one who kindles the evil in the heart through wicked deeds gives birth to lawlessness.

3. Just as the sick often need wine, but not at every time, in every measure, or of every quality—and a physician is needed to administer the wine—so also in the healing of those in need, the economy of grace cannot be beneficially activated by everyone.

4. When the mind struggles against passion, if it prevails through strength and attentiveness, it bears the trophies of victory against the passion and, as it were, crowns itself through God. But when it grows soft and yields to pleasure, becoming a slave and captive to sins, it gives the enemy cause for boasting, arrogance, and pride.

5. Just as when the air is not struck, we still receive in our dreams the memory of certain words and sounds, not having received the voice through hearing but having been imprinted by the heart itself, so also must we understand that the voice of God comes to the prophets in a similar manner.

6. Many consider good things to be evil when they are laborious, while they pursue evil things, because of the pleasure they offer, as if they were good. And the error concerning these things among men is immeasurable.

7. The body is metaphorically a psaltery, a musical instrument harmoniously arranged for the hymns of our God, while the actions performed through the body are the psalms, offered to the glory of God when they are harmonized by the Word and produce nothing discordant in their movements. The song, however, pertains to those things which belong to pure contemplation and theology. Thus, the psalm is a musical discourse when it is rhythmically performed according to harmonic principles upon the instrument, while the song is a melodious voice rendered harmoniously without the accompaniment of the instrument. Here, then, is inscribed "a psalm of a song," which we understand to signify the corresponding action to the contemplation of the divine words.

8. Just as a crooked foot does not fit into a straight shoe, so also does the praise of God not suit perverse hearts.

9. Just as those with stomach ailments and poor digestion are treated by physicians who stimulate their appetites through certain preparations in their food, so that the senses, excited by the seasoning, always intensify their desires, so also in the matter of the word of truth: experience itself, it is said, will always provoke in us an insatiable desire.

10. Deceit is wrongdoing secretly offered to one's neighbor under the pretense of something better.

VARIOUS THOUGHTS

11. Since eructation is a hidden vapor arising from the digestion of food, when the bubbles burst and are exhaled upward, so also the one nourished by the living bread that came down from heaven and gives life to the world, and filled with every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, according to the customary allegory of Scripture, the soul nourished by sacred teachings emits an eructation suitable to the food.

12. The "seasonable" differs from "beauty," for the "seasonable" refers to what is fully matured in its proper time for its own peak, such as ripe grain ready for harvest or the fruit of the vine that has reached its proper ripeness through the season of the year and is fit for enjoyment. Beauty, however, is the harmonious arrangement of parts, adorned with grace.

13. Myrrh, stacte, and cassia: stacte is itself a kind of myrrh, the finest variety. For when the aromatic substance is pressed, the part that flows out is assigned to stacte, while the thicker part that follows is called myrrh. Thus, the fragrance of Christ exhales myrrh because of His passion, stacte because He did not remain inactive or unmoving in the three states but descended into Hades for the sake of the economy of the resurrection, that He might fill all things with Himself. And He exhales cassia because cassia is a very thin and fragrant bark wrapped around a woody stem. Perhaps, then, the passion of the cross, for the benefit of all creation, is deeply and wisely signified to us through the name of cassia. Thus, you have myrrh for the burial, stacte for the descent into Hades (since every drop flows downward), and cassia for the economy of the flesh concerning the wood.

14. Often, even sickness is beneficial when it is meant to instruct the sinner, and anger is harmful when it becomes a means to sin for the one who possesses it. So also wealth has at times served some as a means to licentiousness, while poverty has brought many who were inclined to evil to their senses. But for you, sin is to be avoided, and God is the one refuge from evils.

15. Shechem, the special portion given to Joseph by Jacob, is a type of the covenant, which was thought to be given to Israel alone.

16. Many approve of wicked deeds, calling the witty man charming, the foul-mouthed man urbane, the bitter and angry man formidable, the stingy and ungenerous man economical, the prodigal man liberal, the lewd and licentious man indulgent and relaxed. In short, they detach every vice from the virtue that lies adjacent to it.

17. Weigh carefully what is more advantageous for you: to choose temporary pleasure and through it receive eternal death, or to choose the hardship of virtue and use it as a means to eternal delight.

18. Strictly speaking, "pangs" are assigned to the pains of childbirth, when the womb, stirred to fullness, pushes the fetus outward. Then, as the birth canal is compressed and stretched by the movement, spasms and contractions of the sinews produce the sharpest and most intense pains for the mother.

19. For it is necessary to believe, as it is said, that God exists, not to seek or to argue about what He is. And if faith is the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen, do not strive to see now what lies far off, nor make the things hoped for uncertain because you cannot yet grasp them in knowledge.

20. Fasting is beneficial not only for future things but also for the flesh itself. For extreme good health has reversals and changes, as nature falters and is unable to bear the weight of such good health.

21. Labors, when practiced over a long period, become lighter for those who are trained in them.

VARIOUS THOUGHTS

22. Truly harmful are reconciliations with evil, since this is a law of friendship: that through similarity, those who are joined together become like one another. Hence, the saying is correct: "Bad company corrupts good morals." For just as in pestilential places, the air breathed in part by the inhabitants deposits disease in them, so also does familiarity with evil implant wickedness in souls, even if the harm escapes immediate perception.

23. Satan is so called because he opposes the good; for this is what the Hebrew word means, as we have learned in the Books of Kings. "The Lord raised up against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite, the king of the Assyrians." He is called the devil because he is both the accomplice of our sin and our accuser, rejoicing in our destruction and holding us up as an example for what we have done. The place of his authority is the air, as the same apostle says: "According to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience." For this reason, he is also called the ruler of this world, since his authority is earthly.

24. Therefore, each of those who have wallowed in the beds of the licentious, immediately after the act, when the frenzy of the flesh has subsided and the mind, coming to the loathsome end of what it attempted, takes a moment to reflect on where it is, as if from a drunken stupor or a storm, a fierce remorse for intemperance enters. For the body feels weaker and sluggish for necessary tasks, utterly feeble. This is why the law of temperance was written in the gymnasiums by the trainers, preserving the bodies of the youth inviolate from pleasures and not allowing them even to glance at the shining forms, if they wished to be crowned, for intemperance brings laughter in the struggle, not a crown.

25. Just as the sick rest their eyes on flowers and grass after gazing at overly bright sights, so also must the soul not constantly look at what is painful, nor dwell on present sorrows, but turn its gaze to the contemplation of what is truly good. Thus, you will achieve constant joy if your life looks to God, and the hope of recompense lightens the sorrows of life.

26. For the gratitude of those who receive is counted as a benefit. Reproof is burdensome to those whose souls are afflicted by sorrow, and at the same time, they are difficult to persuade and resistant to the comfort of those who are entirely unaffected. But allowing them to cry out and lament over empty and futile things, once the evil has subsided a little and relaxed, then gently and calmly apply consolation.

27. Do not be harsh like one who imposes on needs. Do not wait for a famine to open a granary; for the precious grain of the people is cursed by the populace. Do not await famine for gold, nor common want for private abundance. Do not become a merchant of human misfortunes, nor make the wrath of God an opportunity for amassing wealth. Do not aggravate wounds and scourge the afflicted.

28. For when the membranes are filled with the soot that the wine exhales, the head is struck with unbearable pains, unable to remain upright on the shoulders, sometimes falling and slipping on the vertebrae, revealing in rambling speech the excess and contentiousness in banquets. And there are fractures for the drunkards, unable to stand upright because of their drunkenness, for they are overturned into countless forms of falling.

29. For those seeking consolation, the blood boils in the heart like fire roaring and blazing, and the anger, rising to madness, shows the angry man in another form, the familiar and recognizable one, as if changing a mask on stage.

VARIOUS THOUGHTS

30. Anger stirs up strife, strife begets insults, insults lead to blows, blows to wounds, and from wounds often come deaths. For just as the one who strikes someone who feels no pain punishes himself—for he neither avenges his enemy nor relieves his anger—so also the one who insults the uninsultable cannot find comfort for his passion. On the contrary, as I said, he is tormented.

31. Just as we carefully place easily combustible wood as far as possible from fire, so also must we, as much as possible, keep friendships away from the company of the envious, placing ourselves outside the arrows of envy.

32. Just as arrows violently shot, when they strike something hard and resistant, return to the one who shot them, so also the movements of envy, harming no one, become wounds for the envier.

33. Just as rust is a peculiar disease of wheat, so envy is a sickness of friendship. Yet one might praise this evil, for the more violently it is stirred, the more severe it is for the one who possesses it.

34. If they also know how to inflict harm through the eyes alone, so that healthy bodies, even in the prime of life, wither under their envious gaze, and the whole mass is suddenly destroyed, as if a deadly stream flows from the envious eyes, ruining and corrupting—I dismiss this account as popular and introduced into women's quarters by old wives. But I say that the demons who hate beauty, when they find suitable dispositions, use them in every way for their own purposes, so that they even employ the eyes of the envious for their own will.

35. Just as vultures are drawn to foul things, flying over many meadows and sweet-smelling places, and flies pass over what is healthy but settle on wounds, so also the envious do not even glance at the splendors of life and the greatness of achievements but fixate on what is rotten. If some stumble occurs, as often happens in human affairs, they publicize it.

36. For in other dangers, the sharpness of the sword brings a quick death, the rush of fire swiftly extinguishes life, or wild beasts tear apart vital limbs, not allowing the pain to be fully felt. But famine has a lingering evil, a drawn-out pain, a disease that settles and lurks, a death that is present yet always delayed. For the natural moisture is consumed, the heat is cooled, the mass shrinks, the strength is gradually withered, the flesh clings to the bones like a spider's web, the skin has no bloom: the red flees as the blood wastes away, the white is gone, the surface blackened by thinness; the body is livid, pitifully judged by pallor and blackness from the suffering. The knees cannot bear the weight but are dragged with force; the voice is thin and feeble; the eyes are weakened by hollows, lying uselessly in their sockets like the pits of fruit; the stomach is collapsed and shapeless, having no swelling or natural tension of the bowels, but clinging to the bones of the back.

37. For the sharing of groans brings comfort to those in pain. The history of virtuous men provides a kind of light for those being saved on the path of life.

38. For the body, when it falls into a chill, first becomes entirely livid as the blood congeals; then it is shaken and convulses, the teeth chatter, the sinews spasm, and the whole mass contracts involuntarily. A sharp pain and indescribable suffering, reaching even the marrow, makes the sensation unbearable for those who are freezing. Then the extremities are mutilated, as if burned by fire; for the heat, driven from the extremities of the body and fleeing inward, leaves dead what it has abandoned and gives pain to what it presses upon, as death gradually approaches through the freezing.

VARIOUS THOUGHTS

39. For it is not the one who lacks necessities who is steadfast, but the one who, in abundance, endures hardships.

40. For dreams are naturally, for the most part, images of daily cares. For whatever our pursuits in life are, such also must be our dreams.

FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS

XIV. Fundamental Questions.

† Essential inquiries of the same author.

† In how many ways does sin operate among us? In eight ways:

In how many ways is sin activated by us?

There are eight ways:

1. Through ignorance, as when Jonathan tasted the honey with his staff during the battle.
2. Through deception, as Eve sinned.
3. Through abandonment, as Peter did.
4. Through being carried away, as Moses was.
5. Through compulsion, as Darius, unwillingly, handed Daniel over to the Babylonians.
6. Through disbelief, as Lot's wife did.
7. Through contempt, as Gehazi took the gold and despised his teacher.
8. Through a wicked disposition of the soul, as the Pharisees and the one who hid the talent.

How many ways of repentance are there?

There are seven:

1. Humility, through which the tax collector was justified by a single word.
2. Confession: "For I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord, and You forgave the iniquity of my heart."
3. Forbearance: "Forgive, and you will be forgiven," and so on.
4. Suffering evil and giving thanks, which is even greater than all the aforementioned.
5. Showing mercy through wealth: "For almsgiving and faith cleanse sins."
6. Defending the wronged: "Judge for the orphan and justify the widow."
7. Persistently knocking, as the friend who came at midnight asking for what he needed, and the widow who importuned the unjust judge.

The one who has pride falls into four evils, from which all destruction comes to him:

1. First, the proud person does not need any counsel.
2. Second, he despises small things, from which great things begin.
3. Third, he attempts things beyond his strength, from which he is weakened.
4. Fourth, he despises all people, from which he is hated and hated in return, and from this comes plotting.

Envy and hatred differ:

Envy arises in the prosperity of a neighbor or equal, whether slightly greater or lesser, and this envy does not produce plotting. Hatred, however, arises from offense, either in deed or in thought. For one hates the person whom he supposes has offended him, either in thought or in deed, and this hatred produces plotting.

FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS

Know that you have as many enemies as those who suppose you have offended them, either in thought or in deed, and vice versa. The soul of a person loves another when it is convinced, either in thought or in deed, that the other is friendly. There are three things that produce natural friendship: kinship, virtue, and companionship. There are four things that attract the goodwill of the people: natural or assumed kinship, zealous support for friends, banquets, and financial support for those in need.

What and how many are the roots or chief sins?

1. The first sin is pride, which is the root of all sin and specifically the mother of seven vices: disobedience, boastfulness, hypocrisy, intemperance, stubbornness, discord, and innovation.
2. The second is envy, from which five evils are born: hatred, gossip, slander, delight in the misfortunes of others, and sorrow at their prosperity.
3. The third is anger, from which six evils are born: swelling of the mind, strife, insolence, shouting, indignation, and blasphemy.
4. The fourth is sloth, which is the numbness of the mind that begins to neglect the good. Its daughters are six: malice, quarrelsomeness, faintheartedness, despair, numbness regarding the commandments, and wandering of the mind toward lawless things.
5. The fifth is greed, whose daughters are seven: betrayal, deceit, fraud, perjury, disturbance of the mind, violence, and hardness of the mind toward mercy.
6. The sixth is gluttony, from which five evils are born: untimely joy and sorrow, frivolity, impurity, talkativeness, and dullness of the mind.
7. The seventh is licentiousness, whose daughters are eight: blindness of the mind, recklessness, instability, condemnation, self-love, hatred of God, love of this age, and fear or despair of the future.

Concerning the twelve degrees of pride:

1. The first degree of pride is curiosity, through which one curiously directs their eyes everywhere.
2. The second is the blindness of the mind, through which a person uses words arrogantly.
3. The third is rejoicing in vain.
4. The fourth is boastfulness or self-praise.
5. The fifth is eccentricity, through which one wishes to appear holier than others.
6. The sixth is self-conceit, through which one prefers themselves above others.
7. The seventh is presumption, through which one believes themselves capable of great things.
8. The eighth is the avenging of one's own wrongs.
9. The ninth is feigned confession, through which one does not choose to bear punishment for their own sins, which they confess falsely.
10. The tenth is apostasy.
11. The eleventh is licentiousness, through which one takes pleasure in doing whatever they want with impunity.
12. The twelfth is the habit of sinning, which leads to contempt for God.

How many things are required for the mystery of the Eucharist?

For the perfection of the mystery of the Eucharist, as far as its intrinsic perfection is concerned, these things are required:

1. First, that the minister of this mystery be true, that is, having received the authority from the Church through ordination.
2. Second, that the mystery be performed according to the pattern of the Church. The true pattern of the Church is summarized in these four things:
    1. First, that there be a table, either immovable or movable, consecrated and not in any random place.
    2. Second, that the proper matter be offered, which was also present at the first institution of the mystery, when our Lord gave His body and blood to the disciples in the form of bread and wine. Without such matter, the mystery cannot be true.
    3. Third, that the dominical words be pronounced: "Take, eat," and "Drink," and so on, through which the transubstantiation of the matter occurs by the power of the One who first spoke these words and handed down to us the command to do and say thus. These words are, as it were, the specific cause of the mystery, and without these words, or if they are altered in any way, the mystery cannot take place.
    4. Fourth, that the intention and purpose of the minister be true and steadfast, through which the power of those words is in some way applied to the matter. The intention and purpose of the minister are revealed through the prayers, for if all else is present but the intention to perform the mystery is lacking, the mystery does not occur.

These things pertain to the part of the mystery itself. As for the communicant, three things are required: faith in the absolute truth of the mystery without any doubt, worthy reception (that is, preceded by purification through repentance for past sins), and proper vigilance after reception.

There are three kinds of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit:

1. When someone sins against what is specifically attributed to the Holy Spirit, that is, goodness, choosing to sin out of malice.
2. When someone disbelieves in the Holy Spirit, speaks evil of Him, or thinks evil of Him.
3. When someone sins unrepentantly and without turning back, thereby nullifying the forgiveness of sins, which is given and always occurs through the Holy Spirit.

PRAYERS FOR METANIES

Liturgical Works.

I. Prayers for Metanies and Partial Summaries of the Psalms.

† Prayers for Repentance and Partial Summaries of the Psalms in Synopsis by the Most Wise, Most Learned, and Most Holy Patriarch of Constantinople, Lord Gennadius.

Prayers for Metanies

1. Glory to You, O Lord our God, glory to You; glory to You in the highest and on earth, to You who are immeasurably exalted above all essence and divinity, the invisible, one, and only God; glory to You, the eternal Creator and Ruler of all, and our Benefactor of all that we are and all that we possess. I bow down in humble prostration of soul and body before Your majesty, I, Your most lowly creation. I praise Your infinite power; I hymn Your unfathomable wisdom; I give thanks for Your boundless providence; I bless Your unconquerable and supremely good long-suffering. O God, the most holy and blessed Trinity, in the highest and simplest unity of nature, save me. O God, do not disregard my praise; heed my supplication, and do not forsake me.

2. O Most Holy God, sanctify me through Your Word and Your Spirit; renew me by Your Word and strengthen me by Your Spirit; enlighten me by Your Word and guide me by Your Spirit. May Your Word revive my mind, which is deadened, and may Your all-holy Spirit sanctify my will. O Almighty and Mighty Lord, implant in my heart the love of Your commandments; subject my senses to Your Word; strengthen my speech. Illuminate my mind with the rays of Your truth; turn my will toward You, the only true object of desire; instruct my tongue. Grant me repentance.

3. Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, the unworthy one. Lord, through the blessed Virgin, be reconciled to me, a sinner, and save me. Lord, through Your Cross, protect me. Lord, through Your holy angels, fortify me. Lord, through the holy martyrs of truth, arm me. Lord, through all the saints, pour down Your mercy upon me. Lord Jesus, through Yourself, freely have mercy on me, the one purchased by Your most precious Blood.

4. O All-Holy Spirit of God, come and dwell in me; wipe away the long-standing stains of my sins; drive away from me the spirits of ignorance and wickedness; shine forth in my heart the radiance of Your gifts; tear me away from the passions of this present age and draw me wholly toward the love of eternity.

5. O Most Holy Trinity, Most High and Almighty, through Your compassion, have mercy on me and save me. Make me worthy to offer reverently that most perfect and divinely taught prayer: "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come." Grant to us, Your servants, we beseech You, O Lord God, to rejoice unceasingly in the salvation of soul and body, and through the intercession of the glorious and ever-blessed Virgin Mary, may we be delivered from present sorrow and partake of eternal joy through our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom You live and reign, together with the Holy Spirit, unto the ages of ages. Amen.

6. Hail, O Queen of the heavens; hail, O Lady of the angels; hail, O holy root from which the Light has dawned upon the world; hail, O glorified one, more beautiful than all others; hail, O richly adorned one, and ever intercede for us before Christ.

End of the Prayers

PRAYERS FOR METANIES

These are from St. Isaac.

1.Bend your knees according to custom and rise, and seal your heart and your limbs with the life-giving sign of the Cross. Stand for a moment in silence, until your senses are at rest and your thoughts grow calm. After this, lift up the inner contemplation of your heart to the Lord and beseech Him with sorrow to strengthen your weakness, and let the movement of your tongue and the thoughts of your heart be in harmony with His will until you find rest. Then, say quietly in the prayer of your heart as follows.

2.Lord Jesus Christ, my God, who visits Your creation, to whom my sufferings and the weakness of our nature and the strength of our adversary are manifest, protect me from the malice of the common enemy who envies my salvation, for his power is manifold, and our nature is wretched, and our strength is feeble. Therefore, O Good One, who knows our weakness and bears the burden of our infirmity, guard me from the turmoil of thoughts and the flood of passions, and make me worthy of this holy service, lest in my passions I corrupt its purpose and be found before You shameless and audacious.

3.One of the fathers stood and prayed with these words: "I, as a man, have sinned; You, as God, forgive." Lord, make me worthy to be dead to the conversation of this age in truth.

A Prayer Against Involuntary Thoughts of Pride

1. Christ, the fullness of truth, may Your truth dawn in my heart, and may I come to know how to walk in Your way according to Your will. May God grant you to perceive something born of silence. From the orderliness of the senses and the disposition of the body arises the orderliness of thoughts. A heart that is harsh and merciless is never purified. When you approach your bed, say to it: "O bed, perhaps this night you will become my grave, and I do not know whether, instead of temporary sleep, that eternal sleep which is to come may enter me this night." If you love repentance, love also stillness; for without stillness, repentance is not perfected. If someone disputes this, do not contend with them.

2. The one who is conscious of their sins is greater than the one who benefits the world through their contemplation. The one who sighs for even one hour for the sake of their soul is greater than the one who raises the dead in prayer, when their dwelling is found among many. The one who is deemed worthy to see themselves is greater than the one deemed worthy to see angels; for the latter communes with bodily eyes, but the former with the eyes of the soul. Let no one bring forward the Apostle's words, "Let him be accursed," as an argument against praying alone and the like; for the one who has received the power of Paul is also commanded to do this. Paul, however, received from the Spirit within him what was for the benefit of the world, as he himself testified, saying, "For necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!" And the choice of Paul did not consider the manner of his repentance, but rather to preach the gospel to humanity, and he received extraordinary power.

3. Lord, make me worthy to be dead to the conversation of this age in truth, and know that You have gathered every supplication in this way, praying and adding the deed to the prayer, truly standing in the freedom of Christ. "Lord, make me worthy to hate even my life for the sake of the life that is in You." Just as salt is to all food, so is humility to every virtue, and it has the power to break the strength of many sins. Humility is achieved through the constant remembrance of one's transgressions, the expectation of approaching death, and wearing simple clothing. It is also achieved by always choosing the lowest place, by

always engaging in the least and most despised tasks, by not being disobedient, by maintaining unceasing silence, by not desiring to attend gatherings, by wishing to remain unknown and unjudged, by not holding onto anything in complete self-will, by hating the company of many people, and by hating the love of money. Beyond this, it is achieved by lifting the mind above all blame and accusation from any person and envy, by not having one's hand with everyone and everyone with them, but being alone in one's own affairs, by not taking on the care of anyone in the world except oneself, and by embracing exile, poverty, and the way of solitude.

Prayer of St. Basil the Great

1.I bless You, O Master God and Creator of all, most good and eternal Father; I bless You, for You have looked with mercy and compassion upon my wretchedness and redeemed me from the mire and the brick-making of this wicked and vain world, and from the many and varied snares of the evil ruler of the darkness of this age. I bless You, O Lord, for You have shown wondrous mercies to me, a sinner, and in all things You have been most kind to me, as my nourisher, guide, guardian, helper, refuge, savior, and protector of my soul and body. I bless You, O Lord, for You have demonstrated great and boundless love for mankind toward me, the unworthy one, for each day, though I am betrayed by my own negligence and handed over to the devil, You preserve and save me and snatch me from his traps. I bless You, O Lord, for You have granted me the gift of repentance for my sins and have shown me countless opportunities to turn from my wickedness. I bless You, O Lord, for when I am weak, You strengthen my infirmity and do not allow me to fall completely, but immediately extend to me the hand of help from above and draw me back to Yourself.

2.What shall I render to You, O most good Master, for all the good things You have done and continue to do for me, a sinner? What thanksgiving shall I offer to You? From morning until night, like a swallow, I will sing, and like a nightingale, I will cry out, and I will not cease to bless You all the days of my life, my Creator, Benefactor, and Protector. I, O Lord, am not worthy to speak to You, for I am a great sinner; yet I thank You, O Lord, for You have been patient with my transgressions and have left me unpunished until now. I thank You, O Lord, for You do not desire the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn back and live. I thank You, O Lord, even though I am insufficient to offer thanks for Your forbearance. Have mercy on me, O Lord, and strengthen my soul for the remainder of my life to do Your will, and guide me safely, as Your compassion knows best, for the sake of the abundance of Your mercies. And when You have perfected me in Your good pleasure, release me from this wretched body. Yes, O Lord, through Your beloved Word and Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and through Your Holy Spirit, with whom You live and reign in the unity of the same essence, unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Prayer of St. Symeon the Wonderworker

1.O Master Lord Jesus Christ, eternal Word of God, Creator and Governor of the greatest and least of all created things, the only-begotten Son, who eternally shone forth from God the Father, and who, without change or confusion, became incarnate from the holy Virgin and truly became man, as You Yourself know, in order to save those You created from the bondage of the enemy; You who are never separated from the Father and yet dwell among us, Your unworthy servants; the Light of truth, the banisher of the darkness of ignorance, the radiance of sober souls, the universal joy of the Orthodox, the sweetness of angels and

blessed souls; You who are wholly beauty beyond satiety, wholly sweetness, wholly desire and longing; the inexhaustible treasure of spiritual understanding for those who genuinely cling to You; You who are by nature good, compassionate, and merciful—drive away from me, the wretched one, the troubling and base thoughts that arise from the offspring of sensual desire. For You know, O Knower of hearts, who see the secrets of my heart, that they are involuntary. Forgive me, O Master of all, and let them not be counted against me as sin, but be merciful to me and send forth Your grace from the holy throne of Your glory, and let it overshadow my weakness, Your unworthy servant.

2.Give me understanding, and I will learn Your commandments and live. Heal the chronic wounds of my soul. Enlighten the eyes of my mind, that I may always perceive Your providence at work in me. What shall I say to You, O Foreknower, who examine hearts and minds? You know that my heart thirsts for You like waterless ground; I long for You and thirst for You, the Light of truth, the Giver of salvation. But send me Your grace, that it may come and satisfy my hunger and quench my thirst. Let one drop of Your mercy fall upon me, O Lord, and it will suffice to kindle like a flame in my heart and consume its thorns and thistles—the evil thoughts—and refresh and rekindle the fertile ground of pious thoughts, which has now become barren and dry. Deliver my captive mind, O Liberator of the world, and snatch it from all the invisible enemies who still hunt it. Grant me to spend the remainder of my life without stumbling and in peace, living in purity, in a life pleasing to You, in purity of heart, in unwavering patience, in constant meditation on Your divine and holy laws, and in unchanging love for the blessed life in You. For You are the life of those who truly live, O Lord, and in You is the eternal and blessed life of those predestined for salvation.

3.Yes, O most good Master, hear my supplication, and let Your grace dwell in me from now on, restraining my mind as with a bridle, lest it wander again and be darkened and cast out from Your light. Through the intercessions of Your all-pure Mother and all Your saints, for to You belong glory and worship, with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy Spirit, now and forever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Prayer of St. Isaac

1.O Lord Jesus Christ, who wept over Lazarus and shed tears of compassion for him, receive the bitter tears of my sorrow; heal my sufferings with Your sufferings; cure my wounds with Your wounds; purify my blood with Your blood, and mingle the fragrance of Your life-giving body with my body. Let the gall that You drank from Your enemies sweeten my soul from the bitterness that the adversary has given me to drink. Let Your body, stretched upon the wood of the Cross, stretch my mind toward You, for it has been dragged down by demons. Let Your head, bowed upon the Cross, lift up my head, which has been struck by my enemies. Let Your holy hands, nailed to the Cross, draw me to You from the abyss of perdition, as Your most holy mouth has promised. Let Your face, which received blows and spitting from the accursed, brighten my face, which has been darkened by iniquities. Let Your soul, which You delivered to the Father upon the Cross, guide me to You by Your grace. I do not have a heart sorrowful enough to seek You; I do not have repentance or compunction, which bring children back to their inheritance. I do not have, O Master, a comforting tear. My mind is darkened by worldly cares and cannot gaze intently upon You in prayer. My heart has grown cold from the multitude of temptations and cannot be warmed by tears of love for You. But You, O Jesus Christ, the treasury of good things, grant me complete repentance and a sorrowful heart, that I may seek You with all my soul, for without You I am deprived of every good thing. Therefore, grant me, O Good

One, Your grace. May the Father, who eternally and without beginning brought You forth from His bosom, renew in me the forms of Your image. I have forsaken You; do not forsake me. I have gone away from You; come out to seek me and bring me into Your pasture, and number me among the sheep of Your chosen flock. Nourish me with them from the green pastures of Your divine mysteries, of which the pure heart is a dwelling place, and in which the light of Your revelations is seen, which is the consolation and refreshment of those who labor for You in afflictions and manifold trials. May we be made worthy of this through the grace and love for mankind of You, our Savior, now and in the age to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Monk Nikephoros Blemmydes

1.O God of mercy, eternal Jesus Christ, long-suffering and most kind King, co-eternal and co-uncreated Son and Word of God the Father, who descended to make incorruptible our earthly and corrupt nature, which had been corrupted by sin, through Your sinless body, which You took from the blessed Virgin; who by Your invincible Cross overthrew the tyranny of the devil and restored the captivity of Your people, as the only mighty and powerful One—free my life from the assaults of that destroyer, strengthening my weakness to resist his various devices and schemes. You who opened to the world the treasures of Your love for mankind when You were crucified, and poured forth from Your holy side two streams—the blood of forgiveness and the water of purification—open to me the treasures of Your love for mankind as I entreat Your goodness. You who accepted the grateful cry of the thief and forgave his offenses, granting him a dwelling in paradise—accept also the supplications of me, Your accountable servant, and forgetting my iniquities, remember me in Your kingdom. You who tore up the record of our ancestral sin with Your precious spear—tear up also the many records of my sins, and inscribe me in the book of Your adoption. You who deigned to die on the Cross for our resurrection and remained dead for three days for our mortification—put to death in me the body of deceitful flesh and mortify my members that are on the earth. You who by Your death destroyed the power of death—deliver my humble soul from spiritual death. You who shook the gates and bars of Hades, which held eternal captives, and made a way for the resurrection of mankind—raise me up from my transgressions, utterly destroying all that holds me back. You who have given us the pledge of incorruption and made the ascent to heaven free for those who choose it—erase from my mind the deception of clinging to perishable things. You who gladden those who suffer for You, crowning them with glory beyond gold and granting them an unshakable kingdom—make me worthy to share in Your sufferings and in Your life-giving death. You who have given Yourself as an example of patience to those who choose to follow in Your footsteps—grant me patience and endurance in trials until the end, and give me understanding and strength to live the rest of my life in a manner pleasing to You, to Your glory, O my Master and Savior, for it is Yours to have mercy and to save us, O Christ our God, and to You we ascribe glory, thanksgiving, and worship, together with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy and life-giving Spirit, now and forever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Prayer of Eustratios

1.I magnify You, O Lord, for You have looked upon my lowliness and have not delivered me into the hands of my enemies, but have saved my soul from distress. And now, O Master, let Your hand cover me, and let Your mercy come upon me, for my soul is troubled and sorrowful as it prepares to depart from this body,

lest the evil counsel of the adversary meet it and hinder it in darkness because of the sins I have committed in ignorance and knowledge during this life. Be merciful to me, O Master, and do not let my soul see the darkened faces of the evil demons, but let Your bright and radiant angels receive it. Give glory to Your holy name and to Your power; bring me to Your divine judgment seat when I am judged; do not let the hand of the ruler of this evil seize me to drag me, a sinner, into the depths of Hades, but stand by me and be my Savior and helper. Have mercy, O Lord, on my soul, which has been defiled by the passions of this life, and receive it pure through repentance and confession, for You are blessed unto the ages. Amen.

Prayer of Gennadios the Monk Before His Patriarchate

1.Heavenly King, Almighty, infinitely powerful, infinitely good, Creator of all essence and all being, Overseer and all-wise Governor of all, of all heavenly and earthly fullness and order, and of every visible and invisible universal and particular perfection and distinction, surpassing all as an unconquerable principle, unattainable idea, and unfathomable end, sought and participated in by all beings in various ways according to Your grace toward them, yet grasped by none, illuminating all not by touching them but by being grasped and pervading all—the blessedness and goodness of all, the ultimate and only true object of desire, O thrice-holy God, eternal Mind, perfected in Yourself by the hypostatic Word and the living and life-giving Spirit, accomplishing in Yourself the eternal and blessed life, as You have willed to reveal to us even in this dark life, through them also establishing, forming, and directing all things and drawing them unceasingly toward the likeness of the most holy Trinity, as each is naturally inclined to be drawn—I believe in You, the only true God. I acknowledge You as the most fearful Master and most generous Distributor of all that exists, the most gentle Judge and the swiftest and most liberal Rewarder, and for this reason I offer worship to You alone, for You alone are to be worshiped by all beings and by all, for all are servants and works of Your almighty will. To You alone I offer thanksgiving morning, noon, and evening, and at all times, I, Your most lowly creation. To You alone I confess my nothingness, my abomination, for against You alone have I sinned and done evil in Your sight.

2.I say that I worship You, O Lord, and yet how often have I become a servant of sin and served corrupt desires and the perishable things of this world instead of You, my Creator and eternally good God by nature. How often have I grieved Your all-holy Spirit, gladdening the enemy of human salvation, whose mouth is open to devour us and who strives in every way to drag us from the path of salvation into the abyss of his own destruction. I say that I thank You, O Lord, but when have I been able to thank You, or when will I be able, who cannot even remember Your benefits, even if I wished to, for they are immeasurable in quantity, incomprehensible in quality, and wondrous in goodness? When have I desired, as I ought, though I have misused them countless times according to my perverse will? But accept my worship, O most compassionate Master, as that of the woman who, after long prodigality, was enlightened and fell at the holy feet of Your beloved Christ. Accept my confession as that of the one who, after experiencing the evils of long wandering from You and a beastly life, fled to the paternal bosom and, instead of sonship and inheritance, deemed it sufficient to be counted among the hired servants: "I have sinned against heaven and before You, and am no longer worthy to be called Your son," nor even to be enrolled among the hired servants, but to be sent to cliffs and chasms and eternal fire. Accept my feeble and ineffective thanksgiving as the offering of the widow's two mites, and let Your grace heal my lack, not only filling what is lacking due to natural weakness

out of goodness, nor only justifying me compassionately instead of the condemnation I deserve for my voluntary shortcomings, but also strengthening and empowering me to have nothing more important in life than the continual worship of You in spirit and truth, and to spend my life in thanksgiving to You, making the enjoyment of the good things I have received from Your right hand a secondary concern.

3.I thank You, therefore, O Lord, now for all the good things that Your majesty has shown me from my very conception until now. I thank You for all things, for You have deemed me worthy to become a child of Your grace, which You sent to the human race through Your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and by His seal You have made me a traveler on the path of the passionless and forerunner of eternal life, if only I would will it. You have set me on the way that many prophets and saints desired to see and walk but could not, for the time appointed by You before the foundation of the world for the most wise and saving dispensation had not yet come. But You have also given me the power to progress in it through the manifold mysteries of Your Church, the pious participation in which lifts us more swiftly than the chariot that took Elijah to the heavenly arches, so much so that we are not hindered by the weight of the body, nor do we even take account of it, except to coexist with it until Your law decrees, for it alone knows how to hinder and drag down those who are preoccupied with it. I thank You, O Lord, for You have revealed Your mysteries to me, an infant, which You have hidden from the wise and understanding, who boast as if it were their own good in Your gift, O Lord, and who make human wisdom their end, though You have given it to them for the exercise of gratitude upon receiving the revealed wisdom, which the foolish call folly, just as the sick spit out the sweetness of honey, deceived into thinking it is bitterness. Alas, O Lord, how sorrowful is my soul, for it is in danger of Your wisdom becoming a judgment to me, for I see extreme poverty coming upon me because of the abundance of Your gifts in me: "For from the one who has not, even what he seems to have will be taken away, and from the one who has been given much, much more will justly be required." But You, O Lord, are not the cause of this terrible fear in me (far be it from You; for as You were pleased to receive me, who was nothing before receiving, so You have willed that I should have and use well, honoring my free will and strengthening it with reason), but I am the cause, burying Your grace. O most terrible burial! For it is not for the harm of others, but for my own, for while preaching to others, I myself become disqualified; while healing others, I am full of sores; while I am condemned by my own words, I ought to be justified by them; for the good salt has become foolish in me through neglect, and the light in me has been darkened by the fog of inactivity in good works. And what decay does not follow? What stumbling does not occur to a soul that is useless and unenlightened? But how much more thanksgiving do I owe You, O long-suffering Master, for enduring my shameless and harmful ingratitude? Or who would not hope that some method of our eventual awareness lies hidden in Your deep counsels? Do You, the most skillful and almighty, lack methods? Or is it not enough for Your love for mankind that I confess myself to be a weak steward of Your goods and ask from You, the Giver, the disposition to use them well, since I have nothing of my own, or rather the strength of my will? For even this has been sufficiently weakened in our nature, and if this can be a sign of true love —to flee to the One who can give—You, O Lord, who said through Your Word, our Jesus, "To the one who loves much, many sins are forgiven, and to the one who is forgiven little, loves little," and not only said but also immediately did, sending away that blessed sinner with the forgiveness of her sins; for Your Word did Your work, and You were in Him, and He in You, and then and now and eternally with You, and in the flesh, one God, but not of a man in the flesh with Him.

4.You, therefore, O Lord, the Almighty and Lover of mankind, the Physician of our shortcomings, speak the word, and Your servant, the son of Your maidservant, will be healed. Let there suddenly come from heaven a sound like a rushing mighty wind, and let the gifts of Your grace be firmly established in me, so that I may no longer be exposed to the testing of the adversary who lies in wait for the relaxation of our spirit and daily plunders and would have led me astray countless times and turned me away in countless ways, had not Your mercy cried out to You not to let my faith fail, and faith, remaining by Your grace, brought me back to the hope of Your visitation. How long will the adversary steal the passible part of my soul with the whisper of sensual desire, and how long will it, instead of obeying reason, be carried away by arrogance and transgress, and after transgressing, hide from You, and You will come out to seek it lovingly and raise it up, ashamed of Your forbearance and marveling at You, who even in its transgression it fears and trembles before and confesses as Master and most fearful Judge? And what will it transgress? Countless things, either what Your commandment urges—sluggishness of mind, tongue, and senses willingly subdued—or what Your commandment forbids, stretching out mind, tongue, and senses toward them, with countless transgressions by which our life is accomplished. Or do You increase the beginning of love and perfect it when it has grown, You who alone also cause it to begin? Did You not stir the soul of Paul so intensely that he immediately attained a certain perfection of righteousness, and Cyprian and many others? I do not dare to desire to be like Paul, that heaven-runner and bold herald of the ineffable dispensation, who is not only unworthy to be called an apostle and disciple of our Jesus, but also unworthy of true humanity and piety because he has the form of substance and piety but has lost their power. But I call upon Your wonderworking grace and proclaim Your power, which accomplishes what is impossible for men. I seek to drink that water of Yours, which becomes a spring of water welling up to eternal life and never rests or congeals from the opposing breaths of wickedness.

5.Thus, O compassionate and merciful Creator, guide my soul with the good things You have given me. Thus make me blessed, though You have shown what is most blessed according to You. For what is more fortunate than Your adoption? What is more blessed than Your inheritance? But I, wretched in my negligence, poor, a bad merchant of Your grace, an unapproved money-changer, good soil because of You and most fertile for wheat, but because of me more fertile for thorns and weeds instead of the seeds sown in me by You, the best Farmer of human life—I desire the good, but from the evil present in me, I choose the evil rather, and therefore it is no longer I who do the evil, but the sin that dwells in me. For the action must correspond to the habit. Therefore, remove the weeds, I beseech You, O most loving Physician and most careful Farmer. You allowed them to grow and be nourished at first, but now they have taken deep root in me against my will. I can, if I will and with You, shake them off and render them useless, but my will is weak. And even if they were to wither immediately, they would sprout again, for the roots remain. And even if I could uproot them by the diligence of my will, not without You, I must be stirred, plowed, and softened, so that the quality in me may again become conformed to the good seed through diligent care, since it has often borne good fruit. I know that You have not lacked nor do You lack care; I will not be ungrateful, so as not to confess this as well. What does the natural law of the written word, Your spiritual law and forerunner of the spiritual, the most perfect law of Your grace, the revelations through Your saints, the daily instruction through the manifold gifts of Your providence, which are all right and saving, and however many of them may seem unfavorable to duller perception and judgment—what do they all desire? Are they not all Your care

for my wretched soul and calls to return to my natural disposition? I know these things, therefore, and confess them, and You have lacked nothing in Your goodness that You have not done. I know, O Lord, how much I owe You for these things. I know the laws of the warfare in which You have enrolled me. I know the power of the armor with which You have clothed me, that I must despise the body as chaff and pay no attention to it when it suffers or seeks some pleasure, unless the rule of Your love approves, to disdain all earthly things for the sake of Your eternity, to put the demons to shame when they see the power of the Cross of Your Christ working in me, by which they have been cast down, to gladden the holy angels daily as they see me freed from the bond of matter and manfully putting off this passionate state. But do I say that I know these things, O Lord? I am ignorant of them all. For just as I think I have, but do not have, so I think I know, but do not know. For to know is also to keep and do these things. But we who do not do them walk in darkness through this age, so much more wretched than the blind, as we willingly stumble. For it is not because we lack eyes or the power to see, but because we close them like the blind, nor is it because we lack feet or the ability to use them that we have long been bedridden, but because of sloth and voluntary neglect. Such I am from birth; such I am at thirty-eight years, but no one can heal my blindness and neglect except You and Your Word, O wondrous Physician. For the more difficult it is to heal these than to repair the bodily organs and implant in them the power of sensation and movement, the more we are convinced that we must flee to You alone, who justify the ungodly, who make things that are not, the only wonderworker and almighty God. For even if those who desire the good desire it through You (for from You is both the willing and the doing), much more will the glory of our improvement and the grace be attributed to You alone, who have worked in us a strong will, so that even if we wished to close our eyes, we could not, having received from You, the Creator, the sleepless and steadfast gaze irrevocably.

6.These things You have also commanded men to pray for. For what else can and do they desire but not to enter into temptation and to be delivered from evil? But You give power to those who confess their inherent weakness to be saved willingly, so that they may also have some claim to eternal life. Such is the abundance of Your goodness, wisdom, and power. We pray these things continually, but carelessly, not persistently. So great is our negligence that we even come carelessly to ask to be delivered from it, which we know is a sword that kills us eternally. Has Your goodness, therefore, O Lord, disregarded us for this reason? Far from it. And what would I have become if You had not taken hold of me, O Lord? Where would I not have rushed headlong into wickedness? But now, just as I recognize my wickedness as my own, so I recognize my lack of wickedness as Yours alone. For I would not call it my goodness, for it does not exist. I confess to You, O Lord, that I am a great sinner, that no one among men has sinned against You as I have, and I alone cannot be humbled before Your height by my own will, for I am humbled by sin, and it truly befits me not to boast except in the weaknesses of my will. For what I misuse is mine alone, and yet none of it is sound. But what You have given and give is Yours, in which those who boast piously will not be foolish. But I, having also acted foolishly in this, have fallen, alas, into a fatal fall. How could our reason ever have been allowed to incline to sensation and be trampled by the servant, unless pride, the beginning of all sin, first lifting it up, made it light, slippery, and ready to be dragged down? And if one sin can kill a man's soul, and so much more as it is weighed down by more circumstances, and as many as the circumstances that weigh it down are the sins that seem to be one, how have I, wretched one, escaped my notice, already dead, a fourth-day corpse, and having my death prolonged along with the ages of life? Killed not by the sword of one sin, but by many and

weighed down by more circumstances, some directed only to the soul, in which the perfection of their kind naturally occurs, others also taking on the shame of reason, and others even the remaining garment of shamelessness, clothed in the disorder of action and sensation? Truly, the vanity of this temporary life deceives me and so dominates me that it does not even allow me to perceive that I am dead.

7.Come, then, O God the King, and grieve with me in a manner befitting God. Send Your Word, who will grieve with me in a human way because of the ineffable communion of nature, and raise me up, thundering with a great and mighty voice that penetrates even into the innermost parts of Hades. And if You raise me up in this wondrous way, I will no longer fear death. For even if I, perceiving myself dead, have tried to revive and raise myself, I am soon proven wrong. For who has life except through You, the Life? Who can rise except through You, the Resurrection? Who can say "Lord Jesus" except in the Holy Spirit? O Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. O Lord, remember me in Your kingdom. O Lord, make me like one of Your hired servants. Through Your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator of our salvation and Creator, I cry to You: Send forth abundantly the Spirit of Your Son into my heart, and I will be saved. You know what I need. You know what Your goodness desires for me. I need forgiveness, cleansing, renewal, Your holy grace, perseverance in Your grace, progress, good works, a humble mind that recognizes and confesses my utter nothingness. I need to be what You made me for and not to be deprived of what Your goodness has prepared for me. Grant these things, O God, most good King, and the time, place, and companionship fitting for this desire. For You see, O Lord, that now all external things, through the negligence of my will, conspire and cooperate with me for evil by turning me to the disturbances they cause. Therefore, let Your will, O Lord, which is good, be done in me, and turn me wholly to Yourself, for You are the beginning and end of all things and the supernatural perfection, and all things are from You and through You and to You. And therefore to You belongs all glory, honor, and worship, now and forever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.[18]

Preliminary Prayer of Matins

1.You alone, O Lord, are good, who in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are praised by all creation as the one and only God, and there is no limit to Your goodness. You alone, out of Your goodness, brought forth the whole creation by Your will alone—the intelligible, the sensible, and the mixed. You alone uphold and preserve all things, providing for all, governing all. You are the Overseer of all things and the Beholder of all thoughts, knowing them before they are first moved, eternally knowing all things, even those that have not yet come to be. You fill all things, contain all things, and transcend all things in unapproachable height. You alone truly exist and are the Source of being, and truly life and the Giver of life, and truly light and the Bestower of light. You alone are mighty, and the measure of Your power cannot be conceived. You alone are wise, and the depth of Your wisdom is incomprehensible and ineffable. You alone are ever merciful and just, and the ocean of Your mercy is boundless, and Your justice is surpassing. You alone are truth itself and utterly faithful in Your words. You alone are the Lord and King of all, doing all things and transforming all

[18] In L. f. 9, this prayer, translated from Latin, is found, which is none other than the collect from the common of the feasts of the Holy Virgin: Concede nos, famulos tuos, etc. From the Latin: "Grant us, Your servants, we beseech You, O Lord God, to rejoice unceasingly in the salvation of soul and body; and through the intercession of the glorious and blessed ever-Virgin Mary, may we be delivered from present sorrow and partake of eternal joy; through our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, together with the Holy Spirit, You live and reign unto the ages of ages. Amen." This is followed by the translation of the antiphon: Ave, regina caelorum, given above on p. 311.

things by Your almighty and sovereign authority. You alone are unchanging, unalterable, transcending all change, remaining always the same. You alone are holy, holiness itself, and the Giver of all holiness. You are great beyond words, and every exalted name falls short of Your majesty. You alone are God, without beginning, without end, eternal and before all ages, and the Creator of all ages.

2.Who is able to declare Your praise, O most wondrous and incomprehensible Master? Angels, archangels, and principalities tremble as they praise Your supreme dominion, and theologians, though eloquent and tireless, fall silent, unable to offer praise worthy of You. For how can they proclaim all Your wonders, which are without number? How shall they recount Your unattainable glory? How shall they theologize Your excellencies? Powers, dominions, and authorities, praising Your divine might, are filled with awe and trembling, and though they offer ceaseless and unyielding praise, it is not as much or as fitting as it ought to be. For what hymn from what essence can be suited to You who are beyond essence and beyond all praise? All the countless ranks and orders of heavenly and holy intelligences, with fear, trembling, and ecstasy, glorify Your kingdom urgently and unrestrainedly, yet they cannot offer glory befitting Your magnificence. For all praise, hymnody, acclamation, and glorification, whether earthly or heavenly, when brought together, cannot reach the measure of Your inaccessible glory, surpassing all strength and exceeding all hyperbole. O Lord, I know that I am dust and ashes and altogether sinful; yet, because of Your abundant mercies, since I too am Your creation, though a sinner and unworthy, I dare with longing to praise You, my Creator, and with confession to entreat You, crying out before You with the divine David: "O Lord, how they have multiplied who trouble me!"

3.And when this is completed, the "God is the Lord" and these troparia: "Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us; for we are without excuse," and the others. Then the Psalter:

4.O all-holy Lady Theotokos, the hope of all the ends of the earth, drive away from me, Your wretched and unworthy servant, sloth, forgetfulness, ignorance, and negligence. Destroy all evil, shameful, and blasphemous thoughts from my miserable and defiled heart, from my polluted soul, and from my darkened mind. Quench the flame of my passions, for I am exceedingly weak, O wretched one. Sprinkle me with the dew of Your grace to cleanse me of evil and deceitful thoughts, preconceptions, and all wicked actions. For You are blessed in all generations, and Your all-holy name is glorified unto the ages. Amen.

Introduction to the Prayers Taken from the Psalms[19]

1.In the churches, let the custom concerning these things prevail, and let the Psalter be read verbatim, for it contains prophecy concerning the divine dispensation, praise of virtue, diverse refutations of wickedness, and various paths of instruction. Through all these, it is fitting that those who hear them in the churches are greatly benefited, both for the strengthening of faith, the security of life, and consolation in afflictions, especially if they are devoted to a godly life. We have made this abridgment so that it may be read at times in our cell and in our private prayers to God, whenever bodily weakness or mental distraction does not overpower us. It will also be permissible for anyone else who shares our mindset in the cell's hymnody to pray this abridgment at Matins, as it is fitting for a private monk. This will be clear to anyone who can discern how those things are fitting for the multitude of Christians, as has been said, and how these are fitting for those

[19] Dionysios of Athos, manuscript 440, folios 116-181, a copy revised and corrected by Scholarios, dated 1458.

who live in stillness. If someone does not share our mindset, let them not find fault. Therefore, if one recites this abridgment and only this pure prayer daily at night, they will have prayed the entire Psalter each day.[20]

Prayers Taken from the Psalms

1.† The remaining psalms of the daily office have been placed here, with only the prayers selected.

2.Glory to You, O Lord, our Creator and God; glory to You, our Provider and Redeemer; glory to You, O just King and most compassionate and gentle Father.

3.I thank You, for when I called upon You, You heard me, O my God; in distress You enlarged me. The light of Your face has shone upon me, and You have given joy to my heart. And now, have mercy on me and hear my prayer, for I have hoped in You, O Lord, my God. Save me from all who pursue me and deliver me, lest like a lion they seize my soul, with no one to redeem or save me.

4.O Lord our God, how wonderful is Your name in all the earth! Your majesty is exalted above the heavens. I will behold the heavens, the works of Your fingers, and marvel at the moon and stars, which You established, the earth and all that is in it. What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You care for him? You made him a little lower than the angels; You crowned him with glory and honor and set him over the works of Your hands. You have subjected all things under his feet, the things in the mountains, the plains of the earth, the things in the sea, and the things in the air. Therefore, I will give thanks to You, O Lord, with all my heart; I will declare all Your wonders as far as I am able, and I will rejoice in You and sing to Your name, O Most High, aided by Your light.

5.O Lord my God, those who know Your name have hoped in You from the beginning of eternity, and You have not forsaken those who seek You, O Lord, nor have You forgotten the cry of Your poor. Rather, You have been their refuge, a helper in times of trouble, and You have not ceased to preserve and guide me. Have mercy on me now, O Lord; see my humiliation from my enemies, You who lift me up from the gates of death. Arise, O Lord my God; let Your hand be exalted. Do not forget the poor to the end, for the poor are left to You; You are a helper to the orphan. Break the arm of the sinner and the wicked, and let their swords fail utterly, so that he may be chastened by his weakness, and Your servant may glorify Your care.

---

[20] Note on St. Augustine. After "prayed the entire Psalter" [εὐχολογήσει], the copyist, by distraction, began to transcribe in D an introduction to the false Soliloquies of St. Augustine, translated in the 14th century by Demetrios Kydones, the text of which is found later in the manuscript, folios 183-177. Scholarios notes the distraction with the words: "This is superfluous here" [Περισσὸν τοῦτο ἐνταῦθα], and then adds the following about St. Augustine: ["Τοῦτον τὸν ἅγιον οἱ Λατῖνοι συνήγορον ἔχειν τῆς οὐ καλῆς προσθήκης αὐχοῦσιν. Καὶ ἅγιος μὲν ἐστι καὶ σοφὸς · οἱ χάριν καὶ ὁ Κυδώνης, οἶμαι, τουτὶ τὸ βιβλίον ἡρμήνευσε, τῇ ἀξιοπιστίᾳ τοῦ διδασκάλου πείσειν τοὺς ὁμοφύλους οἰόμενος · ἀλλ᾽ ἡμεῖς καὶ τούτῳ κεχρήμεθα τῷ ἁγίῳ, καθά περ Γρηγορίῳ τῷ Νύσσης τέλος κολάσεως λέγοντι, καὶ Γρηγορίῳ τῷ θαυματουργῷ σαβελίζοντι, καὶ τοῦ μεγάλῳ τῆς Ἀλεξανδρείας Διονυσίῳ ἀρειανίζοντι, καὶ Εἰρηναίῳ, καὶ πολλοῖς ἄλλοις, οἷς συνέβη τῆς ἀληθείας, οὐ πονηρίᾳ γνώμης, ἀλλὰ λόγων ἀνάγκῃ διαμαρτεῖν, ὡς ὁ μέγας αὐτοὺς ἐξαιτιάται Βασίλειος, εἰ μὴ καὶ ἐνοθεύθη τὰ Αὐγουστίνου · ἔχει γὰρ πολλὴν ὑποψίαν, καὶ εἰ μὴ δύνανται πρὸς τὸν κοινὸν τῆς πίστεως κανόνα ἔλκεσθαι, ὃ καὶ αὐτὸς βούλοιτο Αὐγουστῖνος, καὶ ἠβούλετο δύνανται δὲ τοῖς ἐπιστημόνως καὶ ἀπαθῶς κρίνουσι."] "The Latins boast of having this saint as an advocate for their not-so-good addition. He is indeed holy and wise, and for this reason, Kydones, I believe, translated this book, thinking to persuade his fellow countrymen by the authority of the teacher. But we also make use of this saint, just as we do of Gregory of Nyssa, who speaks of the end of punishment, and Gregory the Wonderworker, who leans toward Sabellianism, and the great Dionysius of Alexandria, who leans toward Arianism, and Irenaeus, and many others who, not out of malice but by the necessity of words, happened to miss the truth, as the great Basil himself accuses them, unless the works of Augustine have also been corrupted. For they contain much suspicion, and if they cannot be reconciled with the common rule of faith, which Augustine himself would have desired—and he did desire it—they can be judged by those who judge wisely and impartially." Then, in the lower margin: ["Τοῦτο ὀφείλει κεῖσθαι πρὸ τῶν εὐχῶν τοῦ ἁγίου Αὐγουστίνου περὶ γὰρ τοῦ Αὐγουστίνου βούλεται . . . ."] "This ought to be placed before the prayers of St. Augustine, for it concerns Augustine and intends to...". The rest has been cut off by the binder's knife.

6.Save me, O Lord, for the godly have ceased, for truths have diminished among the sons of men. They speak vanity, each one to his neighbor; with deceitful lips and a double heart they speak. They are corrupt and abominable in their pursuits; they have turned aside and become useless; they devour Your people as they eat bread, and they shame the counsel of the poor. But You, O Lord, guard us from this generation and preserve us forever. Turn them to the path of truth, that they may not perish in the way of their own destruction.

7.How long, O Lord, will You forget me utterly? How long will You turn Your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, with sorrow in my heart day and night? How long will my enemy be exalted over me? Look upon me, hear me, O Lord my God; enlighten my eyes, lest I sleep in death, lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed against him." Those who trouble me will rejoice if I am shaken, but I have hoped in Your mercy; my heart will rejoice in Your salvation. I will sing to the Lord who has dealt bountifully with me, and I will sing to the name of the Lord Most High.

8.Preserve me, O Lord, for I have hoped in You. I said to the Lord, "You are my Lord, for You have no need of my goods." I will bless the Lord who has given me understanding; I set the Lord always before me, for He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. Therefore, my heart rejoiced, O Lord, and my tongue was glad; moreover, my flesh will dwell in hope, for You will not abandon my soul to Hades, nor will You let Your servant see corruption. You have made known to me the paths of life; You will fill me with joy in Your presence, with pleasure at Your right hand forever.

9.I will love You, O Lord, my strength; the Lord is my stronghold, my refuge, and my deliverer. My God, my helper, I will hope in Him; my protector, the horn of my salvation, and my supporter. Praising, I will call upon the Lord, and I will be saved from my enemies. The pangs of death surrounded me, and the torrents of lawlessness troubled me. The sorrows of Hades encircled me; the snares of death overtook me. In my distress, I called upon the Lord, and I cried out to my God. He heard my voice from His holy temple, and my cry came before Him, entering His ears. The Lord thundered from heaven, and the Most High gave His voice. He sent forth arrows and scattered those who warred against me; He multiplied lightning and confused them. He sent from on high and took me; He drew me out of many waters. He delivered me from my mighty enemies and from those who hated me, for they were too strong for me, with the Lord permitting it, and they overtook me in the day of my calamity. But the Lord again became my support, and He brought me into a broad place. Thus, even now He will deliver me from my enemies, for I trust that He has desired me and will not forsake me. I will be blameless from now on with Him, and I will be kept from my iniquities. Only if You enlighten my lamp, O Lord, if You, O God, enlighten my darkness, in You I will be delivered from raiders, and in my God I will leap over a wall. My God, Your way is blameless; Your words are tried by fire; You are the protector of all who hope in You. You are the One who girds me with strength and makes my way perfect, preparing my feet like a deer's, and setting me on high places. You have given me the shield of salvation, and Your right hand has upheld me; Your discipline has restored me to the end, and Your discipline itself will teach me. The Lord lives, the God who gives me vengeance; blessed be the God of my salvation, my deliverer from my furious enemies. You, O Lord, will exalt me above those who rise up against me and wage war against my salvation, and You will deliver me from unjust men. You will cleanse me from my secret faults, and from strangers You will spare Your servant. For if they do not rule over me, then I will be blameless, and I will be cleansed from great sin by repentance, and I will be preserved henceforth. Thus, the words of my mouth will be pleasing, and the meditation of my heart will always be before You. I will give

thanks to You, both privately and among the nations, and I will sing to Your name, O Lord, my helper and my redeemer.

10.O Lord, our fathers hoped in You and were not put to shame; they cried out to You and were saved. They hoped in You, and You delivered them. But I am a worm and not a man, a reproach of men and despised by the people. Yet I was cast upon You from the womb; from my mother's womb, You are my God and my hope. Do not be far from me, for trouble is near, and there is none to help me. Many dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers has encircled me. But You, O Lord, do not delay Your help; deliver my soul from the sword of visible and invisible enemies. Attend to my defense and do not forsake me.

11.The Lord shepherds me, and I shall lack nothing. He has made me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul; He guides me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me. Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil, and Your mercy pursues me all the days of my life, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

12.Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity, and hoping in the Lord, I shall not falter. Test me and try me; refine my kidneys and my heart, for Your mercy is before my eyes. O Lord, I have loved the beauty of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells. Do not destroy my soul with the wicked, nor my life with men of blood. Redeem me, O Lord, and have mercy on me; then my foot will stand in uprightness, and I will be pleasing in Your truth, and in the assemblies I will bless You, O Lord.

13.The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the protector of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? If an army encamps against me, my heart will not fear; if war rises against me, I will hope in Him. He has hidden me in His tabernacle in the day of my troubles; He has sheltered me in the secret place of His tabernacle; He has set me high upon a rock. And now, hear, O Lord, my voice; have mercy on me and hear me. My heart said to You, "I will seek the Lord." Do not turn Your face from me, nor turn away in anger from Your servant. Be my helper; do not reject me, nor forsake me, O Lord my God. My father and mother have forsaken me, but You, O Lord, have taken me in. Instruct me, O Lord, in Your way, and lead me on a straight path. Do not deliver me to the souls of those who trouble me, nor draw me away with sinners, nor destroy me with workers of iniquity, who speak peace with their neighbors but have evil in their hearts. O my God, do not be silent toward me, lest I become like those who go down to the pit. Hear, O Lord, the voice of my supplication as I lift up my hands to Your holy temple. O Lord, my helper and my protector, my heart has hoped in You, and I have been helped; my flesh has flourished, and with my will and great joy I will give thanks and offer praise to Your majesty.

14.I will exalt You, O Lord, for You have lifted me up and have not let my enemies rejoice over me. O Lord my God, I cried out to You, and You healed me; You brought my soul up from Hades; You saved me from those who go down to the pit. O Lord, there is wrath in Your anger, but life in Your will. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning. O Lord, by Your will You gave strength to my beauty, but You turned Your face away, and I was troubled. I will cry out to You, O Lord my God, and I will make supplication to my God. What profit is there in my blood if I go down to corruption? Will the dust praise You? Will it declare Your truth? You have heard, O Lord, and have had mercy on me; O Lord, You have

become my helper. You have turned my mourning into joy for me; You have torn my sackcloth and girded me with gladness. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever.

15.In You, O Lord, I have hoped; let me not be put to shame forever. In Your righteousness deliver me, and in Your mercy rescue me. Incline Your ear to me; hasten to deliver me. Be to me a God of defense and a house of refuge to save me, for You are my strength and my refuge, and for Your name's sake You will lead me and nourish me. You will bring me out of the snare they have hidden for me, for You are my protector, O Lord. Into Your hands I commit my spirit; You have redeemed me, O Lord, God of truth. You have seen my humiliation; You have saved my soul from troubles, and You have not shut me up in the hands of my enemies. You have set my feet in a broad place. Therefore, I will rejoice and be glad in Your mercy. And now, O Lord, have mercy on me, for I am troubled; my eye is disturbed in anger, my soul and my heart, for my life is spent in sorrow, and my years in sighing. My strength has failed because of my poverty, and my bones are troubled. I have become a reproach to my enemies, and a grief and fear to my acquaintances. I have become like a lost vessel; I have heard the reproach of many who dwell around me. When my enemies gathered against me to take my soul, they plotted against me. But I have hoped in You, O Lord; I said, "You are my God." My times are in Your hands. Deliver me from the hand of my enemies and from those who persecute me. Make Your face shine upon Your servant; save me in Your mercy. O Lord, let me not be put to shame, for I have called upon You. How great is the multitude of Your goodness, O Lord, which You have hidden for those who fear You. You have worked for those who hope in You in the presence of the sons of men. You will hide them in the secret place of Your presence from the strife of men; You will shelter them in Your tabernacle from the contradiction of tongues. Blessed be the Lord, who alone does wondrous things. Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered.

16.Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute sin. But I have acknowledged my iniquity, and I have covered my sin. I said, "I will confess my sin to the Lord," and You forgave the ungodliness of my heart. You are my refuge from the trouble that surrounds me; my joy, deliver me from those who encircle me.

17.Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous; give thanks and sing to Him a new song, for the word of the Lord is upright, and all His works are done in faithfulness. The Lord loves mercy and justice; the earth is full of the Lord's mercy. By the word of the Lord the heavens were established, and by the breath of His mouth all their host. He spoke, and they came to be; He commanded, and they were created. The Lord frustrates the plans of the nations; He nullifies the thoughts of the peoples and annuls the counsels of rulers. But the counsel of the Lord endures forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations. His eyes are upon those who fear Him, upon those who hope in His mercy, to deliver their souls from death and to nourish them in famine. Therefore, our soul waits for the Lord, for He is our helper and protector, and in His holy name we have hoped. Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us, as we have hoped in You.

18.O Lord, many are those who war against me and wrong me and plot against my salvation. But You, take up shield and buckler, and arise to help me. Say to my soul, "I am your salvation." Let those who seek my soul be ashamed and confounded; let those who devise evil against me be turned back and put to shame. Let them be like chaff before the wind, and let the angel of the Lord drive them away. Let their way be darkness and slippery, and let the angel of the Lord pursue them. O Lord, O Lord, who is like You? Delivering the poor from the hand of those stronger than he, the poor and needy from those who plunder him. O Lord, restore my soul from the malice of my enemies; deliver my only one from lions. Let not those who hate me

without cause rejoice over me, nor those who hate me without cause wink with their eyes. For they speak peace with their neighbors, but evil is in their hearts. They have opened their mouths wide against me. They said, "Aha, aha! Our eyes have seen it." You have seen, O Lord; do not be silent. O Lord, do not be far from me. Arise and attend to my judgment, O Lord my God; let them not rejoice over me or say, "We have swallowed him up." Let them be ashamed and confounded, but let those who desire my righteousness rejoice and be glad, and let them say continually, "Let the Lord be magnified," those who desire the peace of Your servant. As for me, my tongue will meditate on Your righteousness, all the day long Your praise.

19.The lawless one says in his heart, "There is no fear of God before his eyes." And because of this, many are those who trouble my soul. But we, though sinners, hope in the shelter of Your wings, for with You is the fountain of life, and in Your light we shall see light. Therefore, extend Your mercy to those who know You, O Lord, and take refuge in You. Let not the foot of pride come upon me, nor the hand of the sinner move me.

20.O Lord, You are my endurance, and my support is from You. Deliver me from all my iniquities; You have made me a reproach to the foolish. I was mute and did not open my mouth, for You have done it, and in reproofs for iniquity You have disciplined me. But remove Your scourges from me, for I have fainted from the strength of Your discipline. I have often stumbled against Your laws, O Lord, but now I say, "I will guard my ways so that I do not sin with my heart and my tongue," guided by Your support. Therefore, hear my prayer, O Lord, and do not be silent to my tears. Forgive me, that I may recover before I depart. Let me first be comforted by Your mercy, and then, when You command, I will depart. I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined to me and heard my cry. He brought me up out of the pit of misery and from the mire of clay, and He set my feet upon a rock and directed my steps. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn to our God. Blessed is the man whose hope is in the name of the Lord, and who does not look upon vanities and false madness. You have done many wondrous things for me, O Lord, and Your thoughts are beyond compare. And now, O Lord, do not remove Your mercies from me; let Your mercy and truth always support me, for evils have surrounded me, and there is no number to them. My iniquities have overtaken me, and I cannot see; they are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart has failed me. Be pleased, O Lord, to save me; O Lord, hasten to help me. Let those who seek my soul to destroy it be ashamed and confounded together; let those who desire evil for me be turned back and put to shame. Let them immediately bear their shame who say to me, "Aha, aha!" Let all who seek You, O Lord, rejoice and be glad, and let them say continually, "Let the Lord be magnified," those who love Your salvation. But I am poor and needy; the Lord cares for me; You are my helper and protector, O my God; do not delay.

21.Judge me, O Lord my God, not according to my works, but according to Your kindness. O Lord, do not deprive me of my desire, for You are my God, my strength, and the wall of my hope. Deliver me from an unholy nation, from unjust and deceitful men. Rescue me from the assembly of evildoers; make me worthy to have no concern with the people of this age, but to attend to You alone. Send forth Your light and Your truth; let them lead me to Your holy mountain and to Your tabernacles. For as the deer longs for the springs of water, so my soul longs for You, O God. My soul thirsts for You, the mighty and living God; when shall I come and appear before Your face? Then I will say to my soul, "Why are you downcast, and why are you troubled? Hope in God, the Almighty; let Him suffice for you in all things." There I will give thanks to You, O Lord, sincerely and with undisturbed peace, my salvation and my God.

22.O God, we have heard with our ears; our fathers have told us the works You performed in their days, in days of old. But now You have rejected and humiliated us because of our sins, yet we have not forgotten You nor acted unjustly against Your covenant, nor has our heart turned back, for You, O Lord, have spared us and upheld us, and You have not turned our paths from Your way. Arise, O Lord, rise up, and do not reject us forever. Turn to our poverty and our affliction, for our soul is humbled to the dust, and our belly clings to the earth. Arise, O Lord, help us, and redeem us for Your name's sake.

23.O God, our refuge and strength, a helper in troubles that have greatly found us. Therefore, we will not fear though the earth be troubled. The Lord Most High is awesome, a great King over all the earth and all that exists. Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; as is Your name, O God, so is Your praise to the ends of the earth; Your right hand is full of righteousness, and Your righteousness is full of mercy. You will redeem my soul from the hand of Hades when it takes me; You will shepherd me forever, and I will give thanks to You always for what You have done for me, and for the rest I will endure Your name, and in place of supplication I will offer it to You, for it is good and gracious before those who believe in You and are consecrated to You.

24.Have mercy on me, O God, for the enemies of my salvation have troubled me all day long in their warfare. They have trampled me all day long, for many are those who war against me from on high. But I hope in You and will not fear what evil spirit or wicked flesh may do to me. O my God, I have declared my life to You, who know all things; I have confessed my sins to You and revealed the troubles of my heart. But You have placed my tears before You, and You have not ignored them, as in Your promise; You have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears of bitterness, and my feet from slipping.

25.Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for my soul trusts in You, and in the shadow of Your wings I hope. I will cry out to God Most High, who has done good to me; He sent from heaven and saved me. I lay down troubled, but He sent His mercy and His truth, and He delivered my soul from among the lion cubs. And now, O Lord, deliver me from those who hunt my soul; they have set upon me mightily, but I will be in Your strength, and I will rejoice in the morning in Your mercy, for You have become my helper and my refuge, a helper in the day of my trouble, and Your mercy has overtaken me.

26.O God, You have rejected us and cast us down; You were angry and had mercy on us. You have given us the wine of compunction, and You have given a sign to flee from the face of the bow, that we, Your beloved, might be delivered. For even if we sin, You bear with our foolishness as a father, and glory be to Your mercy and Your kindness. And now, give us help in trouble, for vain is the salvation of man. In You we will do valiantly, and You will bring to nothing those who trouble us. When my heart is faint, You will set me on high; You will guide me, for You have become my hope, a tower of strength from the face of the enemy. I will dwell in Your tabernacle forever, and I will be sheltered under the cover of Your wings.

27.Shall my soul not submit to God? For my salvation comes from Him, and my endurance is from Him. He is my God and my Savior, my protector; in Him is my salvation, my glory, and my hope—in Him alone. Yours, O Lord, is the power, and Yours is the mercy, and You will give to each according to their faith and according to Your compassion. Hear my voice when I cry out to You; deliver my soul from the fear of enemies; shelter me from the gathering of those who do evil, from the multitude of those who work folly and injustice. For no one who trusts in You has been put to shame, but their blows have become like the

arrows of children. Those who behold have feared the majesty of God and have proclaimed His works, and they have understood His creations.

28.In You, O Lord, I have hoped; let me not be put to shame forever. In Your righteousness, deliver me and rescue me; incline Your ear to me and save me. Be to me a God of defense and a stronghold to save me, for You are my strength and my refuge. My God, deliver me from the hand of the sinner, from the hand and tongue of those who do not fear the Lord, for You are my endurance, O Lord, my hope from my youth. Upon You I have been upheld from the womb; from my mother's belly, You have been my protector. In You is my praise continually; I have become a wonder to many, and You are my strong helper. Let my mouth be filled with praise, that I may sing of Your glory, all the day long, Your magnificence. Do not cast me off in the time of old age; do not forsake me when my strength fails. My God, do not be far from me; my God, hasten to help me. Let those who seek my harm be put to shame and confounded. But I will always hope in You, and I will proclaim Your wonders, which You have taught me from my youth until now.

29.How many afflictions You have shown me, and yet You have revived me; You have brought me up from the depths of the earth and comforted me, and in Your counsel You have guided me, and You have increased Your greatness upon me and received me with glory. And I have come to know that those who distance themselves from You will perish, but to cling to You is good, and to place my hope in You. And now, O Lord, attend to me as I call upon Your name and seek Your customary aid.

30.My voice cried out to the Lord; with my voice I called to God, and He heard me. In the day of my trouble, I sought God, and I was not deceived. My soul refused to be comforted, but I remembered God and was glad; at night I meditated with my heart, and my spirit was troubled and faint, but I pondered the days of old. Will the Lord be forgotten forever? Will He no longer show favor? Will His mercy cease forever? Will He restrain His compassion in His anger? Who is a great God like our God? He is our King, our Father, and our Creator. Before the ages, His beginning was, and His goodness and power are inexhaustible. He has accomplished His word from generation to generation; He has worked salvation in the midst of the earth. All things are subject to His command. Arise, O God, now; do not forget Your supplicants; the poor and needy will praise Your name; let not the humble be turned away in shame, nor let those who reproach those who trust in You rejoice. Look upon Your covenant, and do not deliver the soul that confesses You to the beasts, nor forget the groaning of the poor forever.

31.O God, the nations have come into Your inheritance; they have defiled Your holy temples; they have made the flesh of Your servants food for the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth; they have poured out their blood like water mercilessly. We have become a reproach, a mockery, and a scorn to those around us, a lamentation and affliction to the more compassionate. How long, O Lord, will You be justly angry? Will Your zeal burn like fire? Quickly let Your mercies overtake us before we perish, for we are greatly impoverished. Help us, O God, our Savior, for the glory of Your name; atone for our sins, and do not remember our ancient iniquities, lest the nations say, "Where is their God?" Pour out Your wrath upon the nations that do not know You, and upon the kingdoms that do not call upon Your name. Repay them with reproach, O Lord, for they have reproached You and us who call upon You, and let the vengeance of Your name be made known before our eyes among the nations. As our iniquities have justly surrounded us, so let them be ensnared in their own wickedness and blasphemies; for though we are sinners and justly punished,

we are Your people and the sheep of Your pasture. We will give thanks to You, O God, forever; from generation to generation, we will proclaim Your praise.

32.O You who shepherd Your saints, attend; O You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, appear; stir up Your might, and come to save us. Turn us, O God, and let Your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. O Lord God of hosts, how long will You be angry with the prayer of Your servants? You feed us with the bread of tears and give us tears to drink. You have made us a reproach to our neighbors, and our enemies mock us. We know that we have not heeded Your voice nor paid attention to You. We have profaned Your statutes and have not kept Your commandments, and for this reason You have delivered us to the desires of our hearts, and we have walked in our own ways. You have visited us with a rod, and with stripes You have chastised our iniquities; and if we had walked in Your ways, You would not have humbled our enemies. But You are merciful, O Lord, and compassionate, and Your mercies are upon all Your works. Look down from heaven and see, and visit this vine which Your right hand has planted. You drove out the nations and planted it, and it filled the land. And now, because of our sins, You have broken down its hedge, and all who pass by pluck it. The boar from the forest has ravaged it, and the wild beast has devoured it. The right hand of those who trample it and oppress us is exalted, and we are covered with shame. But remember, O Lord, Your ancient mercies; bow down to the reproach of Your servants, which Your enemies have heaped upon the exchange of Your Christ. Pursue them in a tempest, and in Your anger confound them, and then they will seek Your name, O Lord, and they will know that You alone are the Most High over all the earth, great and terrible, the God of hosts; for mercy and truth go before Your face, righteousness and judgment are the foundation of Your throne. But if they persist in their pride, they will be humbled like the wounded; but those who know You and wage war in Your name will rejoice in You, and in Your mercy they will be exalted, and in the light of Your countenance they will walk with joy, and they will cling to Your faith and love, shaking off the gloom of despair. Blessed are You, O Lord, forever. Amen, amen, amen.

33.The Lord reigns; He has clothed Himself with majesty; the Lord has clothed Himself with strength and girded Himself. For He has established the world, which shall not be moved. How great are Your works, O Lord; exceedingly deep are Your thoughts. A foolish man does not know, and an unwise man does not understand these things. How long, O Lord, will the sinners boast? Will they speak iniquity, and will those who seek Your righteousness and Your judgments, enlightened by You, be downcast? Understand, you senseless among the people; and you fools, when will you become wise? He who planted the ear, does He not hear? Or He who formed the eye, does He not see? He who disciplines the nations, will He not correct? He who teaches man knowledge? The Lord knows the thoughts of men, that they are vain apart from Him, not guided by the divine Spirit. Blessed is the man whom You discipline, O Lord, and whom You teach from Your law. If the Lord had not helped me, my soul would soon have dwelt in Hades. When my heart was overwhelmed within me, Your consolations delighted my soul, and You became to me, O Lord, a refuge and a helper of my hope. And now, O Lord, uphold me to the end of my life, and weaken the wickedness of those who act foolishly against You and Your servants, that they may repent and come to know and walk in the way of love and truth.

34.Come, let us rejoice in the Lord; let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, for the Lord is a great God and a great King over all the earth. For in His hand are the ends of the earth, and the heights of the mountains are His. For the sea is His, and He made it, and His hands formed the dry land. Clouds and

darkness are round about Him; righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne. Fire goes before Him and burns up His enemies round about. The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the peoples see His glory. Confession and beauty are before Him; holiness and majesty are in His sanctuary. Come, let us worship and bow down before Him, and let us weep before the Lord who made us. Let us serve Him with gladness, and let us come before His presence with rejoicing, for He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with equity. He is good to all His works; His mercy endures forever, and His truth to all generations. Who can speak of the mighty acts of the Lord or declare all His praises? Blessed are those who keep judgment and do righteousness at all times. Remember us, O Lord, in the favor of Your people; visit us with Your salvation. Our fathers kept Your testimonies and Your commandments, which You gave them, and You heard them and were gracious to them, and You avenged all their deeds. Again, our fathers sinned, and we have become like them; we have transgressed, we have done wrong, we have not understood Your wonders, nor have we remembered the multitude of Your mercies; and You have delivered us into the hands of our enemies, and they have afflicted us, and we have been humbled under their hands. But You, O Lord, who have justly rejected us, save us also through Your mercies. Gather us from among the nations. Remove their heavy yoke from us; grant us relief, if Your goodness has seen a way, that we may give thanks to Your holy name and boast in Your praise; grant us help in trouble, for vain is the salvation of man.

35.O God, do not silence my praise; do not disregard my supplication, for the mouth of the sinner and the deceitful has been opened against me. But I prayed. And You, O Lord, act on my behalf for the sake of Your name, for Your mercy is good; deliver me, for I am poor and needy, and my heart is troubled within me. Let those who rise up against me be put to shame, but let Your servant rejoice. Help me, O Lord, from their wickedness, and save me according to Your mercy alone, and I will give thanks to You in secret, and in the midst of many I will praise Your kindness, for You stood at the right hand of the poor to save me from those who pursue my soul. I will proclaim Your magnificence, for the Lord is merciful and compassionate; He gives food to those who fear Him, both bodily and spiritual; He has brought forth light in darkness for the upright; He has declared the strength of His works to His people. He has sent redemption to them; He has commanded His covenant forever. He has sent forth His word and healed us; holy and awesome is His name, and blessed from now and forever, and from the rising of the sun to its setting. Who is like the Lord our God? He who dwells on high and looks upon the lowly; He who raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the dunghill; He who settles the barren woman in a home, a joyful mother of children? Incomprehensible is Your majesty, O Lord, and unsearchable in thought, and inexpressible in human tongues.

36.I have loved, for the Lord has heard the voice of my supplication, for He has inclined His ear to me whenever I called upon Him in my days. The pangs of death often surrounded me, the dangers of Hades; troubles and sorrows found me, and I hoped in the name of the Lord, for the Lord is merciful and just, extending His providence even to infants, and He has delivered my soul and done me good and rescued my soul from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling. Many nations of demons surrounded me, and in the name of the Lord I defended myself; I was pushed and turned to fall, but the Lord took hold of me; I fell, and in His compassion He raised me up, and He became my salvation. The right hand of the Lord has wrought strength; the right hand of the Lord has exalted me. The Lord has disciplined me, but He has not given me over to death. From the midst of trouble I called upon Him, and He heard me and brought me

into a broad place; therefore, the Lord is my strength and my praise. What shall I render to the Lord for all that He has rendered to me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord always; I will remember Him continually; I will pay my vows to the Lord. O Lord, I am Your servant and the son of Your handmaid, the work of Your hands and of Your daily unceasing providence. O Lord, save me; O Lord, prosper me, and may I please You in the life to come. O Lord, in the land of the living, I will give thanks to You, for You have heard me and have become to me not only here a Savior and protector, but also for eternal salvation.

37.I will give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His mercy endures forever, to Him who alone does great wonders, who made the heavens with understanding, who established the earth upon the waters, who made great lights, who gives food to all flesh, who redeems us from our enemies. I will give thanks to You, O Lord, with all my heart, and before the angels I will sing to You, for You have heard all the words of my mouth; I will worship toward Your holy temple and give thanks to Your name for Your mercy and Your truth, for You have magnified Your holy name above all. In whatever day I call upon You, quickly hear me. If I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me; upon the wrath of my enemies, You have stretched out Your hand, and Your right hand has saved me. The Lord will repay for me; O Lord, Your mercy endures forever; do not forsake the works of Your hands.

38.O Lord, where shall I go from Your Spirit, and where shall I flee from Your presence? If I ascend in thought to heaven, You are there; if I descend to Hades, You are present; if I take up the wings of my mind at dawn and dwell in the farthest parts of the sea, even there Your hand will guide me, and Your right hand will hold me. You have formed me, O Lord; You have created my kidneys and all the strength of my flesh; You have fashioned my soul; You have upheld me from my mother's womb until now. Fearfully I am wonderfully made; wonderful are Your works. My soul knows very well that You have enlightened me, O Lord; You have known all things, the last and the first; You have understood the thoughts of men from afar, and all their ways You have searched out and foreseen; not even my bone is hidden from You; You have known my sitting down and my rising up. Your eyes have seen even my simple and unformed thought, and in Your book all are written, and all will be written. Test me, O Lord, for I am untested; refine me and purify me, and know my heart in Your light, for You alone enlighten my darkness; command me, and I will know my paths; You will know me, if I come to know You, and if I desire You as I ought, You will lead me out of the ways of my own desires and set me in the way of Your will, and in an eternal way, and in Your light You will guide me to the end.

39.Deliver me, O Lord, from demons and from wicked men, who have plotted to trip up my steps. They have hidden a snare for me, and with cords they have stretched it for my feet; stumbling blocks have been placed in my path. But I said to the Lord, "You are my God." Hearken to the voice of my supplication, O Lord; O Lord, You are the strength of my salvation, and You have overshadowed my head in the day of battle. And now, O Lord, do not deliver me to the desire of the sinner, nor forsake me to those who plot against me, nor let their pride be exalted; for I know, O Lord, that You will execute judgment for the poor and justice for the needy, and the upright will give thanks to Your name and dwell before Your face; but the proud and the deceitful will not be directed on the earth.

PRAYER TO THE FATHER

II. Prayer to the Father.

† By the holy Patriarch Kyr Gennadius Scholarius.

1.O God and Lord of mercy, who sanctifies, enlightens, and perfects our life here through the divine and holy mysteries of Your Church, and prepares us for the life to come; who also regenerated me, Your unworthy servant, through baptism, delivering me from ancestral shame and opening to me the hope of eternal life; and who, through repentance and confession, in the abundance of Your loving-kindness and goodness, forgave the impiety of my heart, extinguishing in me the furnace of despair and preparing for me this spiritual nourishment: now also, through this mystery of the Eucharist, of which You have deemed me worthy to partake—You who alone are pure, though I am filled with all impurity—grant that I may be confirmed in the forgiveness of sins obtained through confession and repentance, and that I may advance in spiritual life and attain to the perfection of true human and Christian conduct. May I not only partake of the mysteries of Your Church but also share in their fruits. And grant, O God and King, that I may know You without error, draw near to You in purity, and love You without turning away. Preserve me by Your invisible providence and almighty right hand, unharmed by every satanic attack, and keep me blameless and unstained before You, so that I may no longer approach trembling, fearful, and ashamed, relying only on the power of repentance and the efficacy of confession, but that I may come with boldness and without condemnation to the mysteries of Your Church. For even though I will never be worthy of their greatness and nobility, the judgment will be more severe for me if I approach unworthily. Therefore, send down now Your illuminating and sanctifying grace, O You who alone are holy and undefiled, upon me, Your humble and unworthy servant, as I approach You with reverence, fear, and unwavering hope. Make sanctification continuous within me, and do not allow it to be interrupted by a return of my will to the desires of the flesh and to wickedness. Instead, prepare me to give thanks to You continually, to please You, and to keep Your will in all things. At the same time, implant in me a biting memory of my past sins, an unchangeable hatred for them, a contrite heart, and a spirit of humility, so that I may be completely freed from all guilt. And deem me worthy, with a purer conscience and with a soul and body prepared, to partake thankfully, joyfully, and undistractedly of this spiritual table, and to continue partaking of it until, in due time and in peace of soul, You transfer me to that eternal, most perfect communion, delight, and enjoyment. Through the precious Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, You live and reign unto the ages of ages. Amen.

2.And as many prayers of repentance as You desire: Truly, it is worthy. And the dismissal.

ON THE LORDS PRAYER

III. Paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer.

† The sevenfold prayer with exposition, taught by our Lord Jesus Christ:

1.Our Father who art in heaven, almighty and all-powerful Lord, our Creator and tireless Provider, who bestows temporal goods and prepares us for the eternal and everlasting ones, we beseech Your transcendent, sovereign, and paternal goodness. Hear us, Your least servants, who flee to Your mercies and seek Your paternal aid with faith, hope, and reverent devotion. For You hear even the silent Moses, and if anyone like Moses or near to him fulfills or is fulfilling Your will, You hear them. But we, being far from such sincerity and purity, filled with many stains and defilements, need words of supplication and entreaty, which Your loving-kindness allows and even encourages us to use, so that we may ask and receive from Your right hand, seek and find, and knock so that the door of mercy may be opened. Therefore, summarizing all our supplications and petitions into this sevenfold number, we bring these requests to You—or rather, Your eternal Word and Son, Your wisdom and power, composed this prayer for us and the number of its petitions, and through Him, we humbly yet confidently offer it to You and to Him as to our one God and Creator.

2.Our Lord and heavenly Father, first we ask that Your all-holy name be hallowed in us. For Your name is holy in itself and eternally, even before the world was made, and now it is shared by Your creatures in various ways according to their different ranks in the universe. It is holy and most holy in all things, and it does not partake of any defilement from those who share in it, whether by nature or by choice—especially by choice. And through participation in Your holy name, they themselves become holy in their relation to You, their Creator. For all things are good and holy, as You made them and called them so from the beginning. But some of them, turning away from the good will by their perverse will, become unholy and profane instead of holy. This happens especially to rational creatures, to whom You have given reason and the power of choice for their own good and benefit. But those who misuse this gift for evil become wicked by their own doing. Such am I, having often and in many ways misused Your holy gifts contrary to the purpose for which You gave them. But I beseech You, most gracious Father, let Your holy name be hallowed in me from now on, as it has been hallowed in all Your true servants and children, who were first sanctified in Your name and through pure participation in Your paternal providence. If I am thus sanctified, Your name will be hallowed in me, for it is always and everywhere most holy.

3.Second, we ask, our Lord and heavenly Father, that Your kingdom come. For Your kingdom has ruled sovereignly over the whole world from its very beginning, and You reigned over all creation. But the wickedness and rebellion of those who joined themselves to the evil one and the enemy drove them away from true submission to You, their Lord and Father. Yet Your kingdom came afterward and was made manifest more clearly in the whole world, though not all received it when it came—only those who believed. Some, however, who received it by faith, reject it and turn away by their deeds. And so I, too, by faith acknowledge and proclaim Your kingdom in all the world. But because of the personal blindness that my sins cause, I am dim-sighted toward its present and visible reality, and I do not heed its call. Therefore, I beseech You, let Your kingdom come also in me, Your faithful servant who is useless in deeds and thus more enslaved to sin. Let my reason be subjected to Your will, illumined by Your grace, and let my passions be wholly subjected to reason, so that I may become entirely Your servant and be ruled by You alone. This will also give

me hope of partaking in the heavenly and eternal kingdom, of which Your kingdom here is the way and the foretaste.

4.Third, we ask of You, our Lord and heavenly Father, that Your will be done in me. For Your divine will is done in heaven and on earth, as all heavenly and earthly beings submit to it. But among us humans, who live by free will—which You have given for our good—many often disregard Your will, and even when they see and know it, they foolishly fail to fulfill it. Such am I. But grant me, Father, from now on to have my will wholly conformed to Yours, even if I achieve this only with the help of Your grace. And then You will add a second grace to me, by which I will wholly attach myself to Your will and in all my life will await and worship Your will as it is accomplished.

5.Fourth, we ask of You, our Lord and heavenly Father, that You give us this day our daily bread. For first, we do not ask for various foods, which are for luxury rather than sustenance, but only for bread, which is the support of the human heart. For it is sufficient and necessary for us, and by it alone we can sustain our being and life. Then, we ask for it today, as we need only daily nourishment. For tomorrow and beyond, You will give to Your children who ask, for You are the Lord of all and give all things. And we, too, will ask for it tomorrow and every day as we ought. But if You also provide for us more abundantly, allowing for the needs of the body, we will willingly and joyfully accept Your providence.

6.Fifth, we ask of You, our Lord and heavenly Father, that You forgive us our debts, and having forgiven us who have become debtors to You for many punishments due to our many sins, deliver us from those punishments by Your loving-kindness alone. Therefore, we must first forgive our debtors, and thus run confidently to Your compassion—though what comparison is there between what our brothers and fellow servants owe us and what we owe to You, our Creator, Judge, and Master? Yet Your all-good compassion makes our small kindness toward our brothers the occasion for Your greatest forbearance and long-suffering toward us. For if we do not forgive our brothers their trespasses, neither will You, our heavenly Father, forgive us, nor will we be able to pray rightly for the forgiveness of our own debts while we ourselves do not forgive others. Therefore, as this first condition is promised and kept by us with the help of Your grace, we ask that the forgiveness of our debts come to us from Your loving-kindness.

7.Sixth, we ask, our Lord and heavenly Father, that You lead us not into temptation. We do not ask to be without trials, for without tribulations it is impossible to enter into eternal life, and tribulation is the offspring and fruit of temptation. Rather, we ask not to enter into the depths of temptation, which are impassable and exceed our strength, as often happens to those who are abandoned. Nor do we ask to be shut in and consumed by temptation, but that You allow us to be tempted when You will, for our benefit, as a means of discipline and healing. Let neither the magnitude, nor the multitude, nor the duration of the temptation exceed our strength. But let us, being near the door and having the way of escape close at hand, find deliverance and the way out through repentance, contrition of heart, tears, and awareness of the causes of the temptation, along with thankful acknowledgment of Your justice, and through a firm and faithful hope of deliverance, as You show Your loving-kindness and command. And in asking not to be shut in by any temptation, we include under one name all the kinds and forms of temptation, which are many and varied, and among which are also the temptations that come from the demons, from which we pray to be completely delivered. As for other temptations, we do not ask for complete deliverance from them, but for a brief and lighter experience of them, and for a swift deliverance.

8.Seventh, we ask that You deliver us quickly from this toilsome and wretched body, if it be Your will, for the benefit of our soul. For the sooner we are delivered from it, the sooner we are freed from all temptation, since it is through our connection to the body that every kind of temptation comes to us. And though You have given the body as a helper for spiritual progress to those who use it wisely, this is rare, and for me, because of much folly and negligence, it is even more difficult to achieve. Therefore, it is more desirable for me to be delivered from it sooner. And so I pray according to human understanding, but let Your will be done in this and in all things, for Yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

PRAYER FOR PELOPONNESE

IV. Prayer for the Deliverance of the Peloponnese (1452).[21]

† By the same [St. Gennadius Scholarius], a prayer to the eternal Father and heavenly King, for the salvation of the Peloponnese.

1. O King of great power, Most High Almighty, holy Monarch, one in essence and three in persons, who exists eternally with Your co-eternal and consubstantial Word and Spirit, and through them governs all creation; O only Ruler and wonder-working God, look upon the children of Your eternal law and true faith, the children of Abraham and Jacob, those beloved by You, the children of Your grace, the purchased of Your love, and the zealous for Your divine dispensation. For we have placed our trust in You, and in Your great name, Your mighty hand, and Your exalted arm. We sin, but we do not forsake You; we follow after our desires, but we have not abandoned Your love and fear. Therefore, Your all-powerful majesty never withdraws Your mercy from us, but while chastising us with affliction, You do not abandon Your true people who remain faithful. If the principle of justice demands that we pay the penalty, we have paid it, O Master, though not worthily for our transgressions, yet sufficiently in Your boundless goodness.

2.You once destroyed the Persians who came to destroy our wretched city with utter annihilation. You also delivered the Scythians to destruction, and the Hagarenes, who were often lifted up in pride with their great armies against us, You turned back from us in shame and without success, making Your power and love for us manifest to all nations, always waiting for our repentance and conversion, which we have never sincerely shown. Therefore, we have been afflicted more than all nations, and we are humbled because of our sins. Yet even recently, You punished this wicked Illyrian nation, which rose up against us and inflicted all kinds of evils upon Your servants, with an unexpected display of power.

3.Just as You once guarded the holy city, where the temporal sanctuary was, with heavenly guardians and wonders that surpass all understanding, until it was no longer necessary for them to be crushed by greater chastisements for provoking Your righteous anger too boldly, so also deliver this remaining portion of the Peloponnese, left to us Christians, where the eternal sanctuary is, and redeem this people of Your holy portion from the onslaught of calamities with clear and undeniable miracles. But now, our enemies, the bloodthirsty dogs of Hagar, attempt to drive us out even from this inheritance of ours, and they surround us with deceit and bitterness of heart concealed within.

4.Yet we do not consider our own evils, but their arrogance and insolence against You and Your name. For they will not sin against us, but against Your majesty, if You abandon us. Their bold plans and hands are again prepared against Your saints and Your glory. But we do not know what to do against them, for we have no strength to resist. Our eyes are fixed on You alone, and we lift up our souls to You, weighed down though we are by countless sins like lead, yet buoyed by the hope founded on Your past interventions, our devout faith in You, and our indignation at the impious pride of our enemies.

5.Therefore, with unwavering faith, we come to You and beseech You, the God who hates pride, is full of mercy, and is the protector of all. Manifest Yourself quickly to Your genuine servants and worshippers, who have been greatly insulted by the lawless and abominable and are now threatened with utter destruction,

---

[21] Rossianus 986 (formerly no. 16, folios 286-288, from the 15th century); the edition by S. Lampros, Palaeologeia and Peloponnesiaka, vol. 11, Leipzig 1912, pp. 158-160, based on the same manuscript.

even if they have been somewhat negligent in fulfilling the work of piety. But if our lives are weighed down by greater reasons for being abandoned, and if our many transgressions of Your holy judgments drag us down mercilessly into the abyss of punishments under the yoke of Your righteousness, deliver us from the hand of such enemies, O Master, and destroy us by whatever death You choose, but do not let Your holy things here be further insulted, nor let the foolish and arrogant scorners of Your laws laugh at the destruction of Your beloved, nor let them now say, "Their God did not save them, nor did He protect any of their holy things."

6.But we, O eternal King and best Physician of souls, are ready to repent for our sins and to call upon Your most holy name with a better conscience. We beseech You with fervent desire of soul: turn us by every means to a more pious life, even if it requires cuts and cautery, for without You we cannot come to You, nor can we desire to come without You. Therefore, stretch out Your strength and power for our salvation, and take charge of us and this small inheritance, O best Pilot and Overseer of all this world. Let angels surround and guard us, and let them nullify and turn back the plans of the godless, as Your eternal counsel for us shines forth in the turning of Your angels to You. For it is ours to ask for salvation from You, the good Father, with reverence, but the ways of salvation are with You. Therefore, govern these cities of Yours and us with them, left to our wretched race as a homeland and all our dominion, O eternal, glorious, and wisest Pilot, and bring us into the harbor of salvation, for to You belongs glory unto the ages of ages. Amen.

PRAYER TO THE ONE AND TRIUNE GOD

V. Prayer to the One and Triune God.

† A prayer to the one God in three persons.

1.O God, holy of holies, almighty, eternal, mighty, God of spirits and all flesh, before whose face heaven and earth tremble, and at whose command all the elements are subject; O Trinity in unity and unity in Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; O essence who gives me being, life who gives me life, light who enlightens me, knowledge who gives me understanding; O transcendent in being, in life, in light, in knowledge—all creation worships and glorifies You. And today, I too bow the neck of my heart in faith before the feet of Your majesty. I thank You because You created me from nothing, because You made me in Your image and likeness, because You granted me piety, because You sanctified me through the mysteries of the Church, because You have nourished me from my youth with all Your good things.

2.And why is this, O Creator of heaven, earth, and the abyss, who has no need of my goods? Why have You loved me? What have I given You, that You should repay me? For where was I before I was made, that I could even taste of Your goodness? But by Your grace, I came to be, and I exist, and I have been adorned with Your countless gifts. Your grace alone, Your goodness, has done this. For one of these things, I cannot thank You enough; how then can I thank You for so many? How can darkness praise light? How can vanity praise truth? How can mortality praise immortality? How can the lowly praise the exalted? How can impurity praise purity? Who can praise Your works? Who can declare Your praise? But as a gentle Father, You accept our prayers; You delight in the thanksgivings of Your children.

3.Therefore, make me worthy to thank and praise You without ceasing and to cling continually to Your love. Let me thank You for the many and great blessings with which You have honored me, for the dangers from which You have often delivered me. Let me thank You for both the pleasant and the painful, for You have done all things in good judgment, for You are Lord and Master of our souls and bodies, of life and death, of health and sickness, of prosperity and adversity, and all things are weighed in Your hand. You gladden us by blessing, You grieve us by chastening, You delay by instructing, and You comfort us again by calling back our negligence.

4.Glory to Your manifold wisdom! Glory to Your ineffable power! Praise to Your boundless loving-kindness! Guide the rest of our lives, O gentlest Leader and watchful Pilot. Deliver us from all enemies, visible and invisible. Stretch out Your good hand to help, to draw us out of the deep waters of the world's storms and to lighten the burdens of our circumstances. Govern Yourself the beginning that You, the Pilot, have entrusted to us, for we are but the rudder. Move us invisibly with Your hand wherever You will, wherever You know. For I do not trust in my bow, nor will my sword save me, but Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of Your countenance.

5.Let Your will, O all-good One, be done in us as in heaven and on earth. Do not be angry if we fall, for You know our frame, O God. If You will, You can save us. Make me will what You will, for even what I will, I cannot do unless Your strength empowers me. Comfort my heart with Your ineffable sweetness, and let the contemplation of the future and eternal joy in You lighten my mind. And make me worthy, after this present life, to run to You, my Lord and God, to see the riches of Your kingdom and to behold Your face forever.

PRAYER TO THE ONE AND TRIUNE GOD

Yes, O holy King, true God, my Creator, through the intercessions of the most holy Theotokos, the holy angels, and all the saints.

PUBLIC PRAYER

VI. Public Prayer of Patriarch Gennadius After His Liturgy (1454-1456).[22]

† By the most holy Patriarch Kyr Gennadius Scholarius.

† This prayer was read by him to the people in his patriarchate, after his liturgy, in the Church of the Holy Apostles.

1.O Lord, most holy, Creator of heaven and earth and all that is in them, Overseer of all, most wise, Governor of all, most fearful King, most just and gentle Judge, most compassionate Father; O undivided unity in nature, in the unconfused Trinity of persons, as You have been pleased to reveal to us even in this dark life; O Mind without beginning, Word in hypostasis, and living and life-giving Spirit, who perfectly complete and accomplish the eternal and blessed life in Yourself: You have given us, Your unworthy servants, Your Word in the nature He assumed for us, as our Savior, Healer, and Teacher, our Lord Jesus Christ and God. And You sent down Your most holy Spirit in bodily form, confirming Your disciples with the gifts of the grace of Your Christ, and through them You confirm even to this day those who rightly believe.

2.O God almighty, infinite in power, without beginning, incorporeal, incomprehensible, wondrous in the eyes of the angels, fearful to all Your creatures, beloved by all who love their life and salvation: in You we believe, we confess You as our Master, Father, Judge, and Provider. From our mother's womb, we have been cast upon You; from our infancy, You have been our nourisher, protector, and provider of all the good things we have had from birth until now, both what we possess and what has been taken from us. "Lord, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared to us the works You performed in their days, in days of old." For they did not inherit the land by their sword, nor did their arm save them, but Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of Your countenance, because You were pleased with them and because they did Your will and kept Your commandments. They walked blamelessly in Your ways and worked righteousness. Therefore, they hoped in You and were delivered. They cried out to You often and were saved. They hoped in You and were not put to shame.

3.Likewise, how often have You saved us, their children, from those who oppressed us? How often have You put to shame those who hated us? You chastised us, and again You spared us. You were angry, and again You had compassion. We were struck by Your wrath, and by Your mercy we were immediately revived.

4.But now, O Lord, You have utterly rejected and humiliated us. You have turned us back before those who hate us, who, warring against Your covenants, have plundered Your chosen portion, Your servants, like sheep for slaughter. We are scattered everywhere. We have become a reproach not only to our neighbors but to all people. We have become a mockery and a byword to those around us. We have become an example of calamity in human life. And why, O Lord, have You allowed this to happen to us? Why has Your wrath burned against us? Late have we come to know, O Lord, having been chastened already by Your law, but the

---

[22] A Escorialensis Y. III. 18, f. 148-151, from the 15th century; B Edition by N. Kalogheras, Euthymios Zigabenos' Interpretation of the Fourteen Epistles of the Apostle Paul and the Seven Catholic Epistles [Εὐθυμίου τοῦ Ζιγαβηνοῦ ἑρμήνεια εἰς τὰς ιδ' ἐπιστολὰς τοῦ ἀποστόλου Παύλου καὶ εἰς τὰς ζ' καθολικάς], Athens, 1887, vol. 1, p. Ζ-λα. Title in B: Of the Most Holy Patriarch of Constantinople, Lord Gennadios, on the One and Triune God, the Holy and Super-Essential Trinity, in the Form of a Confession [Τοῦ ἁγιωτάτου πατριάρχου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως κῦρ Γενναδίου εἰς τὸν ἕνα καὶ τρισυπόστατον Θεόν, τὴν ἁγίαν καὶ ὑπερούσιον Τριάδα ἐν εἴδει ἐξομολογήσεως].

fire of desire for things not good fell upon us, and we did not see You, the Sun of righteousness, shining in Your laws. But now we know well and confess that we have tested and provoked You, the Most High God. We have loved You with our lips, but with our tongues we have lied to You, and our hearts were not upright with You. We were not faithful to Your covenants, and we did not keep Your testimonies, but we turned aside and became like a crooked bow. We were corrupted and made abominable in our deeds. We all turned aside; together we became worthless. We dishonored Your feasts. We despised Your glory. We gave our bodies over to passions. We nailed our souls to our bodies. Our right hands became hands of iniquity. Our tongues blasphemed against Your saints. Our lips were deceitful in heart, and in heart they spoke evil. Each one spoke vainly to his neighbor. We swore oaths to our neighbors and broke them. We lent our money at interest and took bribes against the innocent. We abhorred justice and judgment. Our scales were unequal. Our money was counterfeit. Each one plotted the evil of his neighbor in his heart.

5.We, the shepherds, deceived the people of God and disturbed their paths, and under the guise of virtue, we taught wickedness. We, the rulers, disobeyed Your laws, becoming accomplices of thieves, lovers of bribes, seekers of rewards, refusing to judge the orphan or attend to the cause of the widow. In short, we were compared to senseless beasts and became like them.

6.But You, O Lord, were patient to the end. You endured, You waited, that we might produce late fruit, but we always produced thorns. Troubles and hardships found us as a final test for our repentance, but our hearts turned back. You shook the earth, and we reveled. You threatened, and we paid no heed. You taught, but we refused to understand how to do good. You commanded, but we did not listen, nor did we do as You commanded us, that it might go well with us. But in the depth of temptations and the threat of Your abandonment, we, the remnants of our shamelessness, went astray. We made deep plans, but not through the Lord. And so we fell into the pits of our own folly.

7.We confess these things, O God, heavenly King. We do not deny them. We confess that we have become a burden to You, and therefore You no longer forgive our sins. When we stretched out our hands to You, You turned Your eyes away from us. When we multiplied our prayers to You, You turned Your eyes away from us. You did not listen to us, and You showed Your displeasure with earthquakes. For how could You accept hands full of blood? How could You hear lips that blasphemed while praising You? How could You spare such hopeless and unrepentant hardness of heart?

8.Therefore, blessed are You, O Lord our God, and glorified is Your name forever. You are righteous in all that You have done to us. And all that You have done to us, You have done in true judgment. But now, O Lord, we follow You with our whole heart, and we fear You and seek Your face. We condemn our former shamelessness. We curse our disobedience and the deeds by which we provoked Your goodness. Now we acknowledge You as Father, for You have justly driven us from our inheritance here, that being chastened, we might not lose our true inheritance to come. Now we acknowledge You as Master by Your fearful sentence against us, by the manifest heavenly seizure of the good things You had given us, for which we were ungrateful. Now we acknowledge Your power, having been made vain in human hopes. Now we perceive the shame of our faces as in a mirror, in the calamities by which we have been chastened.

9.The faith of Your Christ has not grown weak, but we, having grown weak in it, were corrupted. And He who became man for us and suffered for us has left us exposed to human plots, unable to bear our ingratitude. Your paternal compassion for us, O Master, has not grown cold, but the stench of our sins has

risen even to heaven and turned away Your goodness, and the full weight of Your justice has fallen upon us—or rather, for our sake, since even in chastening, You do good, O all-wise Provider.

10.We have seen Your righteous judgment, O most wondrous King. May we also see the accustomed compassion of Your heart, O gentle and loving Father, for we repent fervently for our sins, and we stretch out all our hope to You, entrusting our souls and bodies to Your sole care. Do not put us to shame, but deal with us according to Your kindness and the abundance of Your mercy. Do not forget our misery, our affliction, our poverty, our incurable pains, our unbearable bitterness. For our souls have been brought down to the dust; our bodies cling to the ground. We are exhausted, we are broken, we are crushed like earthen vessels by the onslaught of evils. But we do not forget Your name, nor do we stretch out our hands to a foreign god.

11.Therefore, if You, the compassionate Father and Master, turn to us again, we will be quickly saved, or else we will perish. Grant us relief in our temptations, O Lord, as much as Your compassion desires. Grant us endurance with thanksgiving, as long as Your just and wondrous will desires to test us in this race of temptations. And if You allow us to be tormented by the waves of temptations until the end of our lives, still preserve our souls. Bring us back to Your love, and establish all our desire in it.

12.We have lost everything, but may we not lose You, O sweetest and eternal Father, our Provider. If You have judged us unworthy of temporal goods, being as we are, do not shut us out from the happiness to come and the blessed life in You. For if we are to have You, O Lord, we have lost nothing. If we are to live eternally in You, we have suffered nothing terrible. If we are to attain our eternal homeland, the sufferings of this exile will not grieve us.

13.Hear us, O Lord, hear us crying out to You in this affliction, lifting up our hands and souls to You, the Most High God and our Creator, and bowing our necks to Your power. Yes, O Lord, hear us through Your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who redeemed us with His own blood, and through Your Holy Spirit, with whom You live and reign in the unity of the same essence unto the ages of ages. Amen.

MORNING PRAYER TO CHRIST

VII. Morning Prayer Addressed to Jesus Christ.

† Another morning prayer.

1.O our Lord Jesus Christ, eternal Word of the unbegotten God and Father, Creator of all creation, and Renewer of human nature through Your surpassing loving-kindness, for which You shared in our flesh and blood and undertook that ineffable and supernatural dispensation without stain: if the holy and heavenly powers are never satisfied, nor will they ever be, but with ceaseless spiritual voices they hymn the majesty and splendor of Your eternal divinity, offering praise to You and to the God and Father who begot You as one, how much more should we, Your humble and earthly servants, purchased by Your precious blood, be satisfied with praising You in mind and mouth? And if Your loving-kindness and grace work in us without ceasing, from morning to evening and from evening to the next morning, why should we give thanks to You, our Benefactor, only at set times and not ceaselessly and without silence? But forgive us, O discerning Christ, for the demands of this temporal life and the necessities of nature divide our attention and do not allow us to meditate on You without interruption or to hymn You without ceasing in thought and speech. And for this reason, we offer to You, as a firstfruit of our daily thoughts and words, the appointed acts of worship.

2.Therefore, I worship You, my Creator and Savior, together with Your unbegotten Father and the life-giving and all-holy Spirit. I bow the knee of my heart and body with fear and trembling before You, my almighty, fearful, and most good Master. I give thanks for all that You have done and continue to do for me. By Your hand You formed me; by Your breath You gave me life; by Your providence You nourished me; by Your grace You made known to me the true faith; by the mysteries of Your holy Church You have instructed me; You have adorned me with the temporal blessings of human prosperity; You have delivered me from dangers; You have raised me up from sickness; You have invisibly guided me to what is profitable; You have rescued me from the vain ways of the world and transferred me to a peaceful life. You govern and nurture me as Your fledgling, as the work of Your love.

3.But how dare I recount Your benefits by category? They are an inexhaustible sea, an unfathomable depth, an invisible height. I cannot finish giving thanks for what has already been done, and a new wave of fresh blessings overtakes me. And even the ability to thank You in any way—what a great gift it is! O my lowliness! O Your goodness, that the only thing I have to offer You in return for all things is thanksgiving and praise, and even this is Your gift. O surpassing love, that You have poured out such a wealth of good things upon me! I know one genuine thanksgiving: the fulfillment of Your will. But if the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. You, O Lord, have said this. And the willingness of the spirit is quenched by temporal cares. But You, O Lord, are alone able to kindle the will and strengthen the flesh for what is good.

4.Thus, I will give genuine thanks if my will is united with Your will, and if my whole heart clings to Your love. And so, make me worthy to give thanks to You, O Christ the King, Son of God and most good God, and to give thanks to Your unbegotten and eternal Father, the God of all. For just as He is the source of all good things for me in You and through You, so I boldly offer my thanksgiving to His majesty in You, His eternal Word, and through You, as to my one Master and Creator, dedicating this to Him.

5.But what shall I say to You, my Guardian, concerning today? And what concerning tomorrow? What true good can I desire for myself that You do not will before me? And who knows my good better than You?

MORNING PRAYER TO CHRIST

You alone know and will what is truly good for me; You alone can accomplish it. Therefore, even if I am silent, You will do what is good for me. But if my supplication is needed to move Your goodness, the mystery of Your dispensation intercedes for me, as does the cross that received You, nailed for my sake, and the all-holy and immaculate Virgin and Mother who supernaturally served this mystery, and the genuine zealots of Your heavenly teaching and way of life, who remained faithful even unto death.

6.With so many interceding for me, open Your hand to me today as usual, and fill me with Your favor. Let Your right hand take hold of me and guide me to the desired harbor of peace. And if my sins hinder the flow of Your loving-kindness, wipe them away; overlook them; forgive them; cast them into the depths of forgetfulness. For the forgiveness of human transgressions is Your ceaseless work, O Christ the King, because the mind of man runs swifter than light, and speech is slippery, and deeds are entangled in the thick darkness of this world. And for this reason, no flesh shall boast before You. But You alone, O Lord, being pure and sinless, can forgive our sins. Comfort my heart, O Lord, with the hope of the forgiveness of my many transgressions. Let not my worthiness guide me, but Your compassionate goodness, and let the contemplation of the future and eternal joy in You lighten my mind. And make me worthy, after this present life, which You have measured with bounds and limits known only to You, to enter into that eternal life and true blessedness and to be numbered among the choir of the redeemed, delivered from the malice of demons by the guidance of good angels.

7.Yes, O our Lord Jesus, unwearying King, for to the eternal and unbegotten King of all, Your co-eternal and consubstantial Father, and to the all-holy Spirit, belongs glory unto the ages of ages. Amen.

MORNING PRAYER TO CHRIST (ALTERA)

VIII. Another Version of the Previous Prayer.

† A prayer to our Lord Jesus Christ.

1.O Master, Lord Jesus Christ, true God, Most High King, most holy, most good, compassionate, eternal Word of the unbegotten God and Father, Creator of all creation, and Renewer of human nature through Your surpassing loving-kindness, for which You shared in our flesh and blood and undertook that ineffable and supernatural dispensation without stain: if the holy and heavenly powers are never satisfied, nor will they ever be, but with ceaseless spiritual voices they hymn the majesty and splendor of Your divinity, how much more should we, Your humble and earthly servants, purchased by Your precious blood, be satisfied with praising You in mind and mouth? And if Your loving-kindness and grace work in us without ceasing, from morning to evening and from evening to the next morning, why should we give thanks to You, our Benefactor, only at set times? But forgive us, O discerning Christ, for the demands of this temporal life and the necessities of nature, and the very order into which You willed us to be born, divide our attention and do not allow us to meditate on You without interruption or to hymn You without ceasing in thought and speech. And for this reason, we offer to You, as a firstfruit of our daily thoughts and words, the morning, midday, and evening acts of worship.

2.Therefore, I worship You, my Creator and Father, together with Your unbegotten Father and the life-giving and all-holy Spirit. I bow the knee of my heart and body with fear and trembling before You, my almighty, fearful, and most good Master. I give thanks for all that You have done and continue to do for me. By Your hand You formed me; by Your breath You gave me life; by Your providence You nourished me; by Your grace You made known to me the true faith; by the mysteries of Your holy Church You have instructed me. You have adorned me with these temporal blessings of human prosperity; You have delivered me from dangers; You have raised me up from sickness; You have invisibly guided me to what is profitable; You govern and nurture me as Your fledgling, as the work of Your love.

3.But how dare I recount Your benefits? They are an inexhaustible sea, an unfathomable depth, an invisible height. I cannot finish giving thanks for what has already been done, and a new wave of fresh blessings overtakes me. And even the ability to thank You—what a great gift it is! O my lowliness! O Your goodness, that the only thing I have to offer You in return for all things is thanksgiving and praise, and even this is Your gift. O surpassing love, that You have poured out all the wealth of Your good things upon me! I know one genuine thanksgiving: the fulfillment of Your will. But if the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. You, O Lord, have said this. And the willingness of the spirit is quenched by temporal cares. But You, O Lord, are alone able to kindle the will and strengthen the flesh.

4.Thus, I will give genuine thanks if my will is united with Your will, and if my whole heart clings to Your love. And so, make me worthy to give thanks to You, O Christ the King, Son of the love of God, and most good God. But what shall I say to You concerning today? And what concerning tomorrow? What good can I desire for myself that You do not will before me? And who knows my good better than You, who alone can accomplish it? Therefore, even if I am silent, You will do what is good for me. But if my supplication is needed to move Your goodness, the mystery of Your dispensation intercedes for me, as does the cross that received You, nailed for my sake, and the all-holy and immaculate Virgin and Mother who supernaturally

served this mystery, and the genuine zealots of Your heavenly teaching and way of life, who remained faithful even unto death.

5.With so many interceding for me, open Your hand to me today as usual, and fill me with Your favor. Let Your right hand take hold of me. And if my sins hinder the flow of Your loving-kindness, wipe them away; overlook them; forgive them; cast them into the depths of forgetfulness. For the forgiveness of transgressions is Your ceaseless work, O Christ the King, because the mind of man runs swifter than light, and speech is slippery, and deeds are entangled in the thick darkness of this world. And for this reason, no flesh shall boast before You. But You alone, O Lord, being pure and sinless, can forgive our sins.

6.Guard, O my sweetest Jesus, the long and prosperous life of devout Christians, Your genuine servants of Your goodness. And after this present life, which You have measured with bounds and limits known only to You, bring us into that eternal life and kingdom, guided not by our worthiness but by Your goodness. Yes, O unwearying King and Lord, for to You belongs all glory, honor, and worship, together with Your unbegotten Father, with whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, You live and reign unto the ages of ages. Amen.

PRAYER TO CHRIST

IX. Another Prayer to Jesus Christ.

† To our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. O our Lord Jesus Christ, You, as the Word of God and eternal Son, are one in divinity with the Father, and You have united human nature to Your divinity in one person since You undertook that ineffable and supernatural dispensation without stain. For it was not the man who assumed the indwelling divine Word, but the divine Word, by the will of the Father and Yours and of the Holy Spirit, who established the man in You and united him to You. Thus, You are one God with God the Father by the nature of eternal divinity, and one man in the one hypostasis of the divinity of the divine Word. And so, in two natures infinitely distinct in being, You are one hypostasis and one person, our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. You share supernaturally with all men only in the temporal assumption, but You are united eternally and by nature only to the God over all, the divinity of the Word. For through such a union of the divine and human realities, no confusion of the two natures followed, even though there was an orderly improvement of the lesser by the greater.

3. But the divine Word exists in You, O Christ—or rather, You are the divine Word in Christ—through the unchangeable infinity, naturally united to God the Father, and present to all Your rational creatures and all beings by the all-powerful communion of goodness, according to the worth of each. Yet You are personally, not naturally, united to Your humanity in a most supernatural way. You remain unchanged in essence, and the man assumed by the divine Word remains unchanged. Therefore, when You were on earth, through this most wondrous union, Your person, our Jesus, was both true God and true man, and You, the same and one, fulfilled the all-wise dispensation, though not in the same way or by the same means, but by performing what was proper to divinity through the instrument of the assumed humanity, and by suffering and enduring what was proper to humanity, governed by the divine Word. Likewise, now in heaven, You are the same, both God and man, blessed by nature as God with the inconceivable and ineffable blessedness of God the Father, and happy as man with the communicable happiness that surpasses the communicable happiness of all others by measures that are not easy to describe.

4. Believing these things firmly and steadfastly, both from Your illumination and grace and from all the facts, even though this heavenly dispensation and loving-kindness toward us men surpasses all understanding and astonishes every mind with its wonder, we rightly include Your hymn in our praise of God, and we glorify You, our Jesus, as the eternal and only-begotten Son of God by Your divinity as the Word, and as the begotten Son of God by the humanity You assumed for us, which You now have glorified in heaven, shining with the beauty of divinity and excelling supernaturally in all virtues among all heavenly beings, sharing in the praise and glory of the divine One who united it to Himself, as is fitting and proper in such a union, where the created surpasses all understanding by sharing in the glory of the Creator.

5. Likewise, we make Your hymn the hymn of our Master and Creator. For not only are You, as the only-begotten Son, one God with Him and Master, and therefore we believe that You are in Him and He in You, as we have learned from Your teaching, but also because of the fruits of the supernatural dispensation, which You accomplished for us by divine power and goodness, and by a philosophy beyond man, as it was for You to act from there, wisely and truly referring all things to Him, preserving His paternal dignity.

6. Thus, it has been and is for us who have first received the good things from there. Therefore, as the more immediate cause of good things for us, and as our advocate, mediator, and guide to Your Father and God, as You have enlightened our ignorance about Yourself, we turn to You more frequently with fitting thanksgivings and hymns, and at the same time, we dedicate our hymn to Your Father, the Master of us and all beings. And for this reason, we hope for forgiveness from all sides through heavenly loving-kindness, since our weakness cannot reach, nor will it ever reach, the divine nature to render even the smallest part of the praise due, but our faith, desire, and wonder are carried by nature and grace toward it.

7. Therefore, O our Lord Jesus, accepting our faith and presenting it as our advocate and mediator to Your Father, who also accepts it, do not let us fail in our other hopes, by which alone we console ourselves concerning Your longsuffering in the face of our great fear. For our faith is strengthened by Your graces in other respects, but in the matter of works, it is without form and needs only Your help to improve and conform to the works of Your laws, or finally, forgiveness, which You have given to all nature, and to many individuals of nature, shaping their formless faith through repentance and confession of sins.

8. Strengthen me, therefore, with Your holy grace and the protection of a guardian angel, for I am weak in will and body and in great need of heavenly help. Either inspire me with boldness to leap over every obstacle, or forgive the frailty of my body and will, which yields to external difficulties and falls short not only on its own account but also because, in this final age of this race, almost all help for pious purposes has been cut off. And do not let me, O our Lord Jesus, be deprived of Your invincible compassion; do not let me be shut out from Your mercies; do not let the guilt of many transgressions send me to punishment and the eternal deprivation of Your love. But let Your mercy, resting on our faith, carry us to the harbor of the redeemed, with the favorable winds of the spirits of loving-kindness, who, through Your loving-kindness alone, having received Your mercies without any merit of their own, run alongside and accompany the joy of the blessed. Hear us, O our Lord Jesus, through Your mercies, for Your mercy is great and glorious on earth and in heaven, and it was, and is, and will be unto the ages. Amen.

NIGHT PRAYER TO CHRIST

X. Prayer to Jesus Christ at the Fall of Night.

† To Our Lord Jesus Christ, a Prayer at the Beginning of the Night.

1. O Word of God, the only-begotten and co-eternal Son of the eternal and unbegotten Father, through whom all things were made by Him; O our Creator and the Creator of all that exists; O tireless Guardian and Provider of all things that have come into being through You, and especially of Your rational creation, us, the race of humans; You who eternally live and reign in God the Father, in the same unity of essence, being one God with Him and wholly containing Him within Yourself according to essence, as His inherent Image and Likeness, and who are also our Creator and Guardian alongside Him; You, in accordance with Your goodness, by which You brought us into existence out of nothing and deigned to fashion and reshape us, established a wondrous dispensation for our improvement, as was fitting, and devised a most wise and suitable way for our salvation, one that harmonizes with the purpose of our creation in You and with our voluntary fall from it, as well as with Your goodness, power, and perfect justice. By Your works from the beginning concerning our nature and by Your subsequent, most astonishing acts of providence, You have unmistakably drawn the attention of those worthy of such a great gift from You, through many noble preparations and diverse illuminations, by which all darkness of doubt is dispelled, so that the most wretched of all people are those who, by voluntary blindness, do not see You, the Sun of Righteousness, and are deprived of Your beneficence, preferring instead to cling to the darkness of error under Your most beautiful light, the divine Word.

2. To You, the eternally and eternally existing Word of God the Father, who, by Your goodness, surpassed all reason and deigned to clothe Yourself in human nature without change, and thus accomplished the entire dispensation of our salvation, our Jesus, Savior, and Redeemer, I, the least of all men and Your servant, bow in worship with soul and body. And though I am utterly unable to give thanks for the magnitude of all the good things You have done for me, and for every kind of benefit without exception, I now set aside this task, for even the whole of human nature, gathered into one, is incapable of offering, whether by works, words, or signs, even a trace of the gratitude that is due.

3. I beseech You only, O most loving Ruler; I entreat Your kindness; I call upon Your merciful and compassionate care. For where my present blessings come from, there also lies my hope for what remains. Necessity and need compel me to knock at the door of Your mercies, but it is hope, grounded in reason, that persuades me, and the word from the most truthful mouth, surpassing all reason, assures me, permitting—nay, urging—Your servants to ask persistently and to knock, for it shall be opened and given. You, the all-seeing Eye, know my need better than I. I ask for forgiveness for the many deviations from the rational and lawful life, for my daily transgressions; for safety in the future, so that I may not fall again into the same weakness of my voluntary thoughts; for protection from the demons who lie in wait for my salvation; for peace from human disturbances; for detachment from temporary things, as far as possible, and for indifference toward them; for steadfastness in Your love and worship, and in the longing for eternal things and for the truest life in You; and simply for all that follows for those who have once entered the door of Your mercy. For to those who enter it, there is an untold abundance of good things, pure happiness, and the most perfect sufficiency.

4. You know all that I need, and You alone have the power to give it. And though I know that I am unworthy to ask or to receive, yet in place of supplication, I offer Your mercy, which ceaselessly pervades, sustains, and preserves all things freely and as a gift, requiring nothing from anyone, neither beforehand nor in return. I appeal to Your indescribable love for humanity, by which You endured so much for the salvation of mankind in the Incarnation, and even prayed for those who crucified You, and for Your servants who have reached such a level of audacity and wickedness. I present my faith in You, and the fact that I wage war under Your name and Your symbols, though I live otherwise in disorder and far from the preparation for better things that You have sent me, yet I am ready to die for Your laws of truth under the hopes of Your guidance.

5. Grant me, O Christ the King, to pass this night in peace, either awake in unceasing remembrance of You and undisturbed by any evil thought, or, if I must sleep, to rest for a little while the weariness of my nature in a sleep free from fantasies and all disturbance, and to rise at the customary and due time to glorify Your majesty. Amen.

PRAYER TO THE THEOTOKOS

XI. Prayer to the Holy Virgin.

† To the Most Holy Theotokos, a Prayer.

1. O most blessed Mary, full of grace from God among women of all ages, blessed above all people, the wonder of the human race, the marvel of the angels, the adornment of all creation, the crown of virginity and purity, the most true image of God, the most gracious Queen: we exalt your holiness next to the holy and natural God, for you made yourself worthy of such a great ministry to Him who wondrously accomplished our salvation. We give thanks to you, after the eternal Word of God, our Creator and Savior, because you cooperated with the common calling and improvement of humanity. We call you our savior, deliverer, and benefactor, as far as is fitting for one in the rank of a servant and minister.

2. Therefore, we beseech you, O most holy Mother of God, do not stand aloof now from our supplication, but with your graciousness, present it to your Son, our Jesus, and through Him to the eternal God and Father and their divine Spirit. For through your soul and flesh, you became the minister of the whole divinity in the most beautiful of divine works and the greatest of heavenly dispensations to us, the human race. Hence, you are well able to stand as an advocate for us before the entire blessed Trinity. And if God directly hears sinners when they turn to His obedience and love, O you of surpassing goodness, how could He reject your intercession for us? How could He overlook our faith in the wonders worked through you? How could He not add your love for humanity to His own, honoring in every way the grace found in you, which He proclaims to the whole world in heaven?

3. Therefore, do not delay your intercession for us, deeming us unworthy. For we confess that we are sinners and unworthy of any heavenly or earthly visitation. Yet we dare to hope and take courage, knowing the depth of divine love for humanity and your God-like compassion. We take courage from our piety toward your Son, whom we confess as Savior and Benefactor, and toward God the Father who sent Him, and we wage war for His name. These are His gifts, not the achievements of our own efforts; yet we gladly received and keep them, and our hope for good things rests solely on them. We also acknowledge and proclaim without ceasing, day and night, your gracious providence for your kindred from that time of human blessings until now.

4. For these reasons, do not overlook us, the least of God's and your servants, but undertake your intercession for us now more earnestly. Bring to completion your care for us. For what good has not come to us from God through you whenever we have knocked at your door? What father or mother has cared for us so visibly throughout life? Add, therefore, the sum of good things.

5. Our life is full of guilt, and our sins are great and terrible. Our repentance is cold and uncertain. We turn to the Creator in repentance, but soon we desert again to wickedness. We are briefly conscious of our faults, but for a long time we are unchanged. We are diligent and zealous in trivial and unnecessary matters, but lax and negligent in what is essential. The love of the Lord and of our neighbor, which sums up the divine commandments and opens the heavenly gates to humanity, is continually violated by us. What, then, should we expect but our final downfall, alas, and the just punishments appointed for such as us?

6. Therefore, hasten, O most compassionate Mother of our compassionate Jesus, and deliver us from such fears. Inspire in us, as much as possible, a firm repentance. Turn us wholly to the care for our salvation.

PRAYER TO THE THEOTOKOS

Fill up with divine love for humanity and your own what is lacking due to our long-standing malice or natural weakness. Dissolve the guilt of our many and great sins, not seeking voluntary punishments from our wretched negligence and this brief life (for that is impossible), but by crushing and pressing our will, and making it material for divine love, from which even thieves, harlots, and tax collectors benefited and were saved through sudden compunction. In short, act quickly, act with compassion, and with gracious foresight and effective means, transfer us from the path of destruction to the way of salvation.

7. For unless through you and your earnestness the divine mercy shines upon us unexpectedly and beyond all justice of our most foolish preparation, our whole being is filled with the most grievous fears. But we know and are convinced that you will not abandon us, drawing this hope from the many mercies of God and your visitations toward us. O full of grace, rejoice! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you, and through you, with us. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, for you bore the Savior of our souls, to whom, with you, be glory, thanksgiving, and worship unto the endless ages of ages. Amen, amen, amen.

PRAYER TO ALL

XII. Prayer to All the Saints, Angels and Men.

To All the Blessed, Whether Angels or Men.

1. O divine and blessed multitude of the incorporeal and intellectual beings in heaven; O perfectly harmonious order of the natures and ranks there, who fill the true cosmos, who dwell purely with the Master, who are filled from the fountain of good things, free from all the cares that accompany this life and the whole of creation: some of you, created in the heavens, are pure intellects, having nothing in common with matter, and for this reason, you are ranked in the lowest degree of participative happiness under your naturally blessed Creator and God, tirelessly carrying out His commands and sharing in His all-wise and all-good providence over all things, as far as is fitting for servants and ministers. Therefore, to us humans, after our common Master and Provider, you are benefactors and suppliers of every good thing from there, contributing to both our life here and the life stored up in heaven, and so you are worthy of reverence and honor. Others of you, created on earth and having lived in bodies, were transferred to the heavenly abode and enrolled in the ranks and orders of the higher spirits, having received the true and thus blessed life as the supernatural reward of your philosophy here.

2. O blessed choirs of angels; O assemblies of righteous spirits from the earth—prophets, apostles, martyrs, hierarchs, hieromartyrs, and saints—who have found the common goal by various paths of virtue. How greatly we marvel at your such great happiness, your ineffable and supernatural communion with the One who alone fulfills the rational and intellectual desires of those who seek Him in truth, the fullness of divine light in you, and with what rapture we exalt you, lifting our minds to these things as far as possible. Yet how many sorrows oppress us, and how many discouragements assail us, as we consider our unworthiness. The gifts from God and your prayers and efforts run together with our hope of ascending to you, but our voluntary inclination toward matter and the resulting heaviness, thickness, and darkness that gather in us daily betroth us rather to the misery of Hades, the perpetual and comfortless deprivation of the Creator and of your radiant fellowship.

3. But stand by us with your prayers, O blessed and loving ones; defend us with your efforts; do not withhold from us your fatherly zeal; do not despair of our salvation; use the spark of our eagerness to ignite the flame of your benefaction. Do not cease to strengthen our minds toward better things, to implant in us a manly and noble desire for heavenly goods, to share in our struggles against the temptations of matter and to strike them down, to thrust into the depths and precipices the enemies that cling to them, who from afar envy human happiness and seek to destroy all that is good, and thus to prepare for us the most gracious divine compassion. And may we one day see you; may we see you, not as full partakers of the good things there (for that is beyond hope), nor even in the lowest and last ranks of those placed in the lowest degrees, but only as spectators from nearby, delighting like hired servants in the beauty of the sons and heirs of the Master, or like dogs devoted to their master, comforting the thirst of our nature, which will then be kindled in us, with the drops that fall from your ambrosial streams. And with the ineffable love for humanity of our common Father and Master, and with your cooperation, we will offer unceasing hymns and thanks.

4. Yes, holy angels of God; yes, all you holy ones of God, our gracious fathers and, after the First Cause, the reasons for the good things in us through your prayers to Him on our behalf. Amen.

TRANSLATION OF A HYMN BY SYNESIUS

Poetic Works.

I. Translation of a Hymn by Synesius.

† The prayer of the blessed and wise Synesius, composed by him in verse and meter, and translated by us into clearer language for the many. He, a Christian of Greek origin, was later ordained bishop of Cyrene during the times of Theodosius and Arcadius.

1. Let us hymn the Son of the pure Bride, the Bride who was not wedded to a man in the lawful marriage bed; the ineffable counsels of the Father sowed the birth of Christ; the holy pangs of the Bride revealed the human form of Him who came to mortals as the ferryman of the light from the fountain, whose ineffable sprout knows the root of the ages. You, O Lord, are the light from the fountain, the ray shining with the Father, who, having broken through the dark wood, illumine pure souls. You are the Creator of the world, the sphere-maker of the glorious stars, the root-planter of the earth's centers; You are also the Savior of mankind. For You, the sun rides, the unquenchable fountain of the day; for You, the bull-eyed moon dispels the dark gloom of the nights.

2. For You, fruits are born, and flocks are nourished; from Your ineffable fountain, sending forth life-giving radiance, You enrich the paths of the worlds. From Your bosom sprouted light, mind, and soul. Have mercy on Your child, bound in mortal limbs and allotted a share in the measures of matter. Save the strength of my limbs from the ravages of disease. Grant persuasion to my words and glory to my deeds, and let me shine in the ancient praises of Cyrene and Sparta. Let my soul, untouched by sorrows, draw a gentle and nourishing life, fixing its twofold gaze on Your light, so that, purified from matter, I may hasten along unerring paths, a fugitive from the toils of the earth, to be united with You, the fountain of the soul. May You grant such a pure life to Your singer and bring it to perfection, whenever I send up a hymn to You, glorifying Your root, the greatest glory of the Father, and the co-throned Spirit, the middle of the root and the branch, and singing of the Father's power, I rest my soul's noble labor in Your hymns. Hail, O fountain of the Son; hail, O form of the Father; hail, O foundation of the Son.

3. Hail, O seal of the Father; hail, O strength of the Son; hail, O beauty of the Father; hail, O pure Breath, the center of the Son and the Father. Send this to me with the Father, watering the paths of my soul and filling it with divine gifts. †

METRICAL PRAYERS

II. Selection of Prayers in Verse.

† From the Metrical Prayers.

Prayer to God the Father.

1. O immortal Father, enthroned above the heavens, Creator of the ages and all that exists; O depth of truth, wisdom, gentleness, and strength, the abyss of all glory, both known and unknown, the inscrutable thought of all things and the heights beyond reach; O Monad; O Triad; O light eternally shining, indivisibly triune, inwardly divided by intellectual distinctions; You are the Mind, and in You are the Word and the Breath, the innate blessedness; self-originated and self-sustained, the beginning beyond all multitude; from Your counsel, proceeding forth within temporal bounds, not from Your nature, lest You have equals; for You alone are God, and all things serve You. You have been everything to me since I came into the light. You gave life to me, who was nothing before, and life surpassing the shining nature of mortals. But from the folly of my heart, I poured out that blessedness when I was wholly bound by earthly desires, and I shared joy with accursed beasts. But as a gentle Father, receive Your pitiful child, who now runs back to the paternal bosom; incline Your gracious ear to my supplications, and grant my heart's blameless desire. Let my prayers flow like streams, watering the ground of my eyelids. Stir my soul, grieved by my errors, and open the gates of my mind, lifting it from the idols that violently drag it down. Let my prayer be a purification from the stain that my wretched, earthly desire has rubbed upon me. Let holy fear carry me to Your love, rising above earthly cares, and may I remain steadfast in Your fiery desires. Grant me the divine breath, sending it upon me, that it may be light, a weapon, and a guiding aid to my enduring soul, assigning me a good angel as a guardian in prayers and thoughts, showing me the unerring path and the footsteps of holy men, driving far away the howling of demons and wild beasts. May it also restrain the destructive harm of life until, under Your laws, my spirit, judged apart from matter, is carried untouched to all the heavenly beings. Grant this, great Ruler, shining forth from repentance, washing away the shame of transgression with Your gifts, and frustrate the hopes of beasts from former times. O Father, O Sovereign, grant my heart's desire.

Prayer to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. O Lord Jesus, Savior of the race of mortals, Son of God from eternity, who proceeded intellectually from Him as the Word from the mind, coexisting and consubstantial with Him eternally; who, having gone forth, remains and, while remaining, goes forth; who shares all the glorious fame of the Father, being one with Him as God and Almighty, the infinite infinity itself, the end of truth and justice, the knower and executor of the Father's counsel; You brought into existence the admirable natures of this world, which did not exist before. You adorn, govern, and distribute to all, as far as they can receive, so that they may ultimately attain their end: to thirst, to long, and to strive to fulfill Your laws. Without them, it is in no way possible. These laws are often violated by the passions of matter, an incredible and grievous thing, though it happens to few, and the harm is small and necessary. This is the lot of the humble among beings. But the crown of evils is in those who have received from You reason and free will for choosing the good, bearing Your beautiful image. First, the morning star fell, and a great host of demons was darkened. Then they shared their fall with mortals, stripping themselves of all good out of envy, turning their will to insolence, deceiving

them with extravagant hopes. And henceforth, all things were seen full of deviation, both of mortals and demons, in their rapine. But Your grace, O King, is blameless; for it is impossible to possess matter without stumbling, nor to follow the reins everywhere, as long as there is lack, and it is constrained by reason. Force could not unite the will to desire the good, but it was necessary for our nature, ordered by choice, to strive willingly to attain its end. Hence, no words can express the unexpected, astonishing grace of Your creative and providential art. The demons, by their nature, cannot turn, and You have left them in darkness forever. But to us mortals, You come as a friendly physician, sharing in our sufferings without blame, rescuing us from the enemy's snares by effective methods, and opening the ways again by all means to those who will once more love the blessed end. Nor have You ceased to prepare for this beforehand, through laws, prophets, and all ways of love. And now, with the gate forcibly opened, in the beginning of more fortunate times, and as the forerunner for Your travelers, sweet hope runs through all this. The envy of enemies, not yet ceased, secretly hinders in many ways. But Your seed, O Savior, is not idle; it prevails and produces a harvest in the field, not gathered by mortal hands, the restoration of the fallen host, and all things now are full of Your praise. All things celebrate Your great compassion. I, worshiping Your divine goodwill, kindness, and supreme love, beseech You, falling down and bending my knee, having lived a dissolute and disorderly life, foolishly straying from Your laws, and filling the wicked one with great joy. Be merciful now, forgive, and grant grace that preserves, arms, and guides me, who am full of all misfortune from myself, senseless, dragged into the mire of dust, and with my mind nailed down by the oppressive weight of lowly passions like a barbarian. Cleanse, enlighten, and rescue me again, O You who died sympathetically for the purification of Your servants, who were emptied beforehand for the deliverance of all mortals. Yes, my Christ, yes, and only-begotten Son of God. †

Prayer to the Most Holy Theotokos.

3. O great glory of virginity, crown and boast; O most holy Mother of the Ruler of all; for You bore the Son from the highest eternity, conceived not by seed but by the breath of God, this extraordinary thing announced by Gabriel. You brought forth to mortals the Healer of error, the Deliverer from the heavy slavery of the cruel, all-devouring dragon, great and arrogant. For He put on mortal form for our sake, and by His counsel, all things yielded to the Almighty. You first purified Your body with holy labors, tears, fasting, and countless prostrations, with prayers to God day and night. You gladly accepted this varied contest, rejoicing in the contests of Your Son for the deliverance of the world. You needed no purification, being exalted, with the winged steps of immaculate virginity. Shining now with the radiance of sweet childbirth, You excel in glory among all the choirs of the blessed, who marvelously hymn the Mother of the King. Standing near the throne of the Ruler, You loosen the bonds of error and faithfully deliver those who flee to Your intercession. You guide their paths through the difficulties of life. You are the help and renowned remedy for all. For us especially, You have been a ready deliverer and light since my parents brought me forth from Your hands. But save me, O Mother of God, worn out by terrible sufferings, distressed by all kinds of evils, and deliver Your pitiful servant from the darkness of life, unwilling to live under wretched times, a companion of beasts in human form, once of a fortunate nation, now destined to see the unrestrained flow of woes and a very hateful form. Show me Your merciful Son before all, and do not let me enter the grim,

dark prison of Hades, though the multitude and magnitude of my transgressions drag me down. But may the great, hopeful compassion of Christ and Your own mercy carry me to a better fate.

Prayer to the Honorable Cross.

4. O Cross, foretold in hidden words from the beginning, You became the strong bulwark of the race, full of human history from the ancient law, the exalted instrument of heavenly providence, the sign when the immaculate body of the Savior was nailed to You. You appeared most fortunately to the last generations of mortals. For Christ, pouring out His blood from His side upon You, gave the price of our nature's sufferings to the Father, the deliverance from the ancient, bitter evil of mortals. He placed willing travelers back into paradise, whence the unlawful, deceitful food once drove them, and Satan's insatiable wickedness was blunted. By Your marks on our breasts, foreheads, and hearts, we strike the raging enemy and turn him away, praising the power of Christ, who gave You to us as a wall and divine protection. Go to Tartarus, go to the ends of the earth, O envious one; the Cross commands, which has subdued you before.

Prayer to St. John the Forerunner and Baptist.

5. O herald of Christ the King, son of Zacharias, Baptist, nurtured in the mountains, and proclaimer of truth, no one greater than You has arisen among mortals except the One who was both mortal and immortal, the Son of the Most High, whose sandal strap You were not worthy to loose. He was the light, and You were the lamp. You were the voice, and He was the Word of God. Intercede for us, that He may be gracious and merciful to our errors and severe transgressions, and plant in us the sorrows of repentance, the unshakable desire for stillness, and not neglect us. May Christ, by His own compassion and Your goodwill, soon grant us a good end through Your intercession.

Prayer to the Holy Apostles.

6. O servants of Christ the King and messengers, who traveled over all the earth with great toil, and He who sent You, Christ Himself, dissolved all opposition, as He promised, willingly accomplishing the work. O initiates of unfathomable wisdom and glory, who received the divine radiance in Your eyes and ears, breathed upon by divine words and deeds, and shining godlike in Your hearts. O fishers of souls and rescuers of mortals, from the depths of ignorance to the light of piety, unerring guides to the heavenly gates, who once wandered in impiety before being caught by the evil plots of the enemy. Now send help to us who thirst, bearing the seal of Christ and faith faithfully, even if we live otherwise estranged from these gifts. Shed a small drop of compassion on the sorrowful, lighten the burdens of wretched flesh, and make the soul a pure vessel from dark sufferings. Free us from the penalty of grievous errors, snatch the mind from the harsh depths of matter, and make it always ready to follow Christ. Beseech Jesus for these things, O heaven-dwellers, and He will not refuse His companions for the sake of His creation.

TO DEMETRIUS

III. Epitaph for Demetrius Lascaris Leontaris, Who Became a Monk Under the Name Daniel (1431).

† To Demetrius.

1. She who was destined to be the one living image of all good things, now lies here, offering praise to God and to the race of mortals, fulfilling a cosmic and extraordinary celebration, and this is to die: for all to come from the midst and for the grace that comes from them to be extinguished together, and for all things to be filled with darkness and shadow. This drama is always shown by time, ever-renewing, which knows no satiety. For this man, whom the tomb now conceals, entered the theater of life as an active image of the fitting life, a statue of virtue, speaking and breathing. All things are moved by the desire for every good thing.

THE BREVITY OF LIFE

IV. On the Brevity of Life and the Flight from the World (before 1447).

† ……

1. I have seen a swiftly turning wheel, a sharp whirlpool, the enchantment of a dream, a fleeting shadow, a flower that immediately fades, dew that evaporates, the wake of a ship that cannot be measured, and things of that sort. These are the images I would compare to human life, if they were not even more fleeting, light, and fluid, and if human affairs were not altogether as nothing.

2. I have also seen a ship with its crew in the midst of the sea, tossed terribly by the waves and about to sink, which, despairing of the waves and strong winds, was finally dashed against the shore and saved beyond hope. I will also compare life to this image. For already, adverse winds, all kinds of terrors, heavy misfortunes, and overwhelming sorrows have seized me, making me, alas, a work of the depths of evil. Against such terrors, even the most resourceful are helpless, and it is impossible to endure unbearable misfortunes unless one is clearly made of stone.

3. There is no remedy or deliverance from evils except flight from the world and turning to God with all one's heart. May I become a lover of this path, may I walk it, and may I measure out my life in the body in this way. For in addition to deliverance from terrors, in addition to fleeing the tumult, I will find a steady calm outside, and I will escape matter altogether and present my spirit, pure, to the Pure One.

4. Matter confuses, disturbs, and troubles my rational mind, lest I succeed and think myself something great. For having failed in one attempt, the enemy boldly summons another trial from the same experience, empties his quiver, and pours out his arrows. But the symbol of the Cross is a strong antidote, and so are humble thoughts, a contrite heart, pure submission, and the remembrance of death. With these as my defense, I will not fear the conflict and will wisely survive if I stand to fight.

5. Therefore, O Christ, King of all, grant that I may quickly attain this desire, lest death overtake me and take me, alas, while I am still impure.

EPITAPH FOR MACARIUS

V. Epitaph for Macarius, Abbot of Pantocrator.

† Verses on the Tomb of Macarius, Abbot of the Monastery of Pantocrator, Hieromonk and Philosopher, Truly Blessed.

1. † Here lies a man who cast aside the life and customs of mortals, adorned with infinite good things, if indeed it is fitting to call such a one a man. For noble and well-nurtured men from Thessaly raised him, thinking that such a man would seek mortal affairs for them. But seized by a heart burning with desire for God, he left behind vain burdens and renounced them.

2. Who could recount the labors by which he utterly freed his mind from matter on the lofty mountains? Who could tell of the great benefits and light that came from there? Who could speak of the battles he fought with his own thoughts, protecting this monastery to the end and extending his hand over it? Who could describe how he understood the paths of nature with his mind and became a knower of the depths of all wisdom?

3. He lies here, for he could not escape his fate; but suddenly, he descended to the earth and ascended to heaven, shining brightly. †

EPITAPH FOR THEODORE SCHOLARIOS

VI. Epitaph for Theodore Scholaris Sophianos (1456).

† ……

1. O most radiant and wise nature, my child, a statue full of all spiritual beauty, rising from the earth in times unfruitful for good deeds, you joined the choir of the blessed. You came as a beholder of holy places, alas, honoring me, your unfortunate father, by sharing even in my latest labors. But you were snatched, alas, from my very hands, and you left behind all in which you flourished: parents, upbringing, education, mastery in learning, and the fullness of all kinds of knowledge, prudence, gravity of character and manners, thought, glance, speech, and gait, full of gentleness and joy, and every kind of moral balance.

2. You left behind a pitiful mother in rags, who lived and breathed only for you, and me with her, the suffering companion of a grieving mother. Truly, you cast off the crowd of mortal fate like a great burden. Taking the fear of God, your faithful companion, as your only guide and fellow traveler, and a sober life in the fullness of time—for four times six years were completed for you—you ended your life in piety at God's call.

3. And now, truly blessed, O noble one, you shine among the ever-joyful; now you truly live, now you are among wise men, in the joyful feasts of the fathers. But we are shadows and a clear burden of passions, rejoicing with you in your good dwelling. We live wretchedly, deprived of our dearest one; and everyone grieves who has any sense of good. But O gift of God, fitting for your calling, still intercede, be an advocate before God, even if you have not written to the generals as a fellow soldier—for you were their peer, both brilliant and armed.

4. Gennadius, a sinner, pitiful, and a lowly servant of God, offers you these words with tears.

IAMBIC ACROSTIC

VII. Iambic Acrostic.

† ……

1. Fragile good fortune and fleeting pleasure, shining gold and swiftly changing thrones—these do not stand firm, running as if on a sphere, truly having an unstable, unsupportable, disorderly, and unsteady foundation, like a dream. Reason, depicted by impassive discourse, heals their ruin and brings stability, by which, winged, it reforms nature, fixing it and raising it to an immovable state.

2. From this, the beginnings and movements of armies frighten and turn aside the blows of injustice, the unrestrained insolence of innate enemies, and the rage of anger or the beastly passions. Reason, running ahead, enslaves them, mingling persuasion as an antidote to violence.

3. But O pleasant spring of my words, for you have bound them with honorable rays; rejoice, most secure foundation of thoughts in an unstable and tumultuous affair. For behold, you humble the foam and thorns of pride with rhythm and draw them into measure.

4. O sympathetic mind and effort of the soul, inclining where it should and soaring again, fortify your battlements with words, by which, raised from poor vehicles, you conquer enemies from lofty shots and see friends from a distant heart, and thus save the image you once had.

THE PASSION OF CHRIST

VIII. On the Passion of Jesus Christ.

† On the Saving Passion of Christ.

1. You, O my Christ, willingly became the prey of cruel hands and bore a swarm of sufferings, You who bear all creation in Your hand. For their madness knows no satiety, and in the penalty of their dishonorable death, they bring insults and outrages.

2. And these things the terrible crowd of Hebrews brought upon You as the final recompense, in return for which You deigned to work wonders among them. But rather, this is part of the emptying that the nature of all humanity gives, crucifying and killing the Benefactor, and not even in the time of remedies honoring the Healer as it should.

3. But creation, wishing, alas, even the inanimate, to share in the passion of the Creator, dissolves its established order and confuses, disturbs, and overturns all things. It desires terrible things for the murderers but is restrained and reined in again, since it heard the Sufferer offer healing prayers instead of blows.

4. And thus You, O sweet spring of all, the Word who makes and transforms all things, again divide us, Your lowly servants, for whom You willingly endured these sufferings, into a double opposing passion, leading us fiercely from here to there, mingling sorrow with joy. For both were necessary for those freed from corruption by Your suffering.

EXHORTATION OF THE YOUNG

IX. Exhortation to the Young.

† Alphabetical Admonition to the Young.

1. Listen, my son, to your father's teachings. Being mortal, do not wander astray in life. Know that God alone is the cause of all things. Accept what happens as beneficial to you.

2. Pray always, even when troubles surround you more. Strive for better things, free from all envy. Let your tongue know mostly how to be silent. Let the fear of God separate you from evils.

3. Consider education to be a healing remedy forever. Restrain laughter, the belly, and especially anger. Desire words more than riches. Do not conform to the way of fools.

4. Weep for the dead; remember death. Show hospitality to strangers, lest you become a stranger to God. When you prosper, remember the common lot. Give your bread cheerfully to the hungry.

5. Carry your conscience as your own rod. Be just to yourself, and then to your neighbors. Flee long sleep as you would an enemy. Shun all insolence and shameful speech.

6. Guard your hands from theft as from bloodshed. Pursue good manners and wise words. Hate falsehood, and love the truth. Thus, pursuing these things, you will not fear judgment.

EPITAPH FOR MARK OF EPHESUS

X. Epitaph for Mark of Ephesus (1444?).

† (Of doubtful authenticity).

1. Here lies hidden the venerable body of Mark, while his spirit has gone to the unity of God. A gentle disposition, a flowing and eloquent mouth, a most wise mind, skillful expression of words, pure perception, and a burning desire for God, flight from the whole world, a quiet life, a martyr's mindset, and uprightness in glory—these were the marks of this father, unwavering in good things and courageous in effort.

2. A true shepherd, a truly great priest, the leader of the Ephesians, a star for all the earth, he set fire to the factions of heresy and guided pious minds with light, skillfully turning them away from new doctrines. He appeared as another Maximus or Chrysostom in these last times. The tomb honors this great man of his homeland as long as he remains within the laws of the fathers.

PRAYER FOR PELOPONNESE

XI. Prayer for the Salvation of the Peloponnese (1452).

† Supplication to Our Heavenly Father and King, God, for the Salvation of the Peloponnese.

† Fourth Tone. The Acrostic: "Send ancient compassion to Your children, Father, and in the Theotokos, Gennadius."

1. Ode 1. I will open my mouth.

Ancient wonders of Yours, O God, Monarch and thrice-radiant, by which You saved us, we who now confess to You our servitude. In hymns we offer this gratitude, having no other way to show You grace. Secret and ineffable, O heavenly Father, are the miracles Your right hand has worked in the Peloponnese, as in the holy city of old, where the eternal sanctuary is. We stand now in mingled joy and sorrow, O Master, for fear crushes us because of the enemies who surround us. But send upon them the spirit of Your wrath, and give Your servants a new cause for joy. Opening Your hand, You fill the desires of the living. How then could You overlook us, O King, whom You purchased with Your precious blood? Therefore, we have been saved by Your visitations. Theotokion. Send calm from the storm from on high to the cities, O all-pure one. For to God, with unwavering gaze, they present You as their advocate, as they have always found You a ready ally.

2. Ode 2. Your hymnographers, O Theotokos.

Grant strength, O Christ, to Your ruler, and exalt the horn of Your people. Let the mouths of the pious, opened wide, sing in joyful songs of Your swift deliverance. We have provoked You to anger, O Father, preferring the desires of the flesh to Your commandments. Therefore, we have been crushed. But turn us back to Your love by Your graces. Let the nations now recognize, O God, Your exalted hand, and let them not delay or shamelessly say, "It was not You who did this for us, but they." Their wine is the venom of serpents, their vine is that of Sodom, and their harvest is impiety. How then will they prevail against Your servants, O Lord? Theotokion. Your childbirth ended the world's worship of evil demons, and the Peloponnese, O all-blameless one, escaping destruction until now by Your miracles, glorifies You.

3. Ode 3. He who sits in glory.

Behold, O greatest Monarch, Trihypostatic King, Your people with gentle eyes, and remember Your ancient covenants, by which You fortified the citadel of our pious faith. Let Your storm drive away Your enemies today, O Lord, those who plot against Your saints, and let them be caught in their own snares, which they prepare for the feet of Your servants. We present Your ancient mercies, O Lord, and we offer the recompense of the proud, by which You alone humbled their arrogance. Grant us now a new song to sing to You. From the vaults of heaven, with the wings of Your providence stretched out, O mighty Ruler, protect Your pious flock, chilled by the rough waves of the impious storm. Deep night has fallen and troubles Your servants, but send the sweetest light of hope and strengthen them. Let the beasts of prey now receive the foretaste of the darkness to come. Theotokion. The enemies of Your cities plot anew, O Savior of the world. Stir up a deadly tumult of affairs from God and men, that they may learn we are led by You.

4. Ode 4. All things were astonished.

With an axe they have shattered Your tabernacles, O Lord, and they strive to abolish Your feasts from the earth, O Jesus, cruel beasts. Therefore, the feet of the zealous for the faith have almost stumbled. Arise, O

PRAYER FOR PELOPONNESE

Lord, and grant salvation from tribulation to Your beloved, whom You once cast off, and we were brought low. For with Your help, all human aid is weak and vain. Your spirit, heavier than lead in water, drowns the impious. Therefore, cast into the depths of the sea those who have ignored You, O Christ, and let those who know You be ashamed. By many and great miracles of Yours, we have been saved, running to You, the Almighty, in the despair of men. Send now upon us, O God, an angel to encircle and crush the enemies. Theotokion. Holy of holies, who deigned to take humanity from the all-pure Mother, always honors her supplication. Therefore, we beseech You now, O Theotokos, approach and ask for our deliverance from enemies.

5. Ode 5. He cried out, foreseeing.

Your compassion, O God the Father, prevailed over the common sin at the end of the ages, and from the throne of glory, You sent Your Word for the salvation of men. In every way, O King, we have also offended You, but apart from You, we know no other, nor do we have one. In troubles, we flee to no other for salvation. If we must pay the penalties for our sins, O all-good One, while our piety is preserved, exact justice in all other things as You will. Heal also the diseases of our souls, sending repentance, and say to us, "Your sins are forgiven," O Jesus, as You did then, for there is no grumbler. Theotokion. Deliver Your servants from dangers, O Lady, the pious and Christ-loving ruler Demetrius, with the queen Theodora and Helen of the purple birth.

6. Ode 6. He who saved in the fire.

Strengthen our trembling hearts, O King, instilling courage and boldness, for we have become utterly weak. But You are able, if You will, to breathe into us now the spirit of life and strength. Behold, O Father, we bring You our souls and bodies, all in contrition of heart and much humility of spirit. Therefore, graciously receive the hope of Your servants and do not put them to shame. You once saved Your chosen ones wonderfully from lions, fire, and the sea, and You have purchased us for Your love, though we have greatly sinned. Deliver us now quickly from the godless, O God. Let the reproaches of our enemies, who have become small on earth by Your will, O Father, be turned to boasting, and let their faces bear the fitting shame of their adversaries. Theotokion. See the affliction of Your nourished ones and servants, O Lady, and the terrible and unbearable pride of the enemies of Your Son. As You have always done, let the wing of Your intercession not delay.

7. Ode 7. Holy children in the furnace.

That the nations may know Your glory and fear before Him whom they despised, turn their plans against us, O Almighty, and show their attempt to be futile, sending unexpected restraining circumstances. Keep Your faithful, bold, and well-advised ones, O all-holy Master, orthodox and steadfast in Your laws, and firmly fix all our hopes for salvation on You, the only Ruler and Pilot. Of all the cities in the world, these alone, O God, Monarch, and thrice-holy, have preserved the pure faith and stand as an immovable stronghold of the truest glories to the world. How then will You allow even these to be shaken? All natures and generations bless You, O Lord, and all will rejoice when these cities of Yours receive from above the saving decree, as unexpected blows now fall upon the enemies. Grant this grace to all. Theotokion. We lift up to You, O Virgin, all our hope for salvation, after the invincible power of Your Son, holding firmly to the past miracles of Your compassion as a pledge of the protection we now hope for.

PRAYER FOR PELOPONNESE

8. Ode 8. Every earthly being.

Who, O King of heaven, can fathom the depth of Your wonders? Who can count Your marvels, by which all Your servants are always saved from dangers, which You have chosen as their rest forever and ever throughout all the earth? If I walk in the midst of troubles, You will give me life, O Master, says Corinth to You, and against the wrath of my enemies, You will stretch out Your hand, O most high Father, and You will bless Your people. Great is Your glory, proclaimed in pious songs. O Christ, this island, bearing Your most precious blood and the sacred symbols of Your fleshly sufferings, faithfully exacts vengeance on the godless. For it knows their impiety cannot prevail. Most high Christ, respect the memory of the First-called and the flock, the preaching of Paul, the chief divine Apostles, the support, boast, and inheritance of the Peloponnese, both needing Your power to save the people who honor them. Theotokion. You appeared as the purification beyond nature by Your childbirth, O Lady, and You destroyed the terrible wall of ancient enmity. Intercede now before the Almighty, loosening the bonds of Your servants' debts and sending wrath upon the enemies.

HYMN TO GOD

XII. Melodic Hymn to God.

† Gennadius' Hymn to God with Supplications.

1. Ode 1. Having passed through the watery way.

O greatest King, graciously receive me, though I dare to utter the fearful name of Your glory with a soul and tongue defiled. I confess my inherent shame and the shameless rejection of Your gifts, yet I come emboldened by the magnitude of Your forbearance, O Lover of mankind. By nature and reason, we, Your servants, know the kindness of our Master and Father. But You have not spared us in any way or sign to confirm this. Therefore, placing my boldness in necessity and my hopefulness in Your forbearance, I attempt to hymn You, who are incomprehensible even to the thoughts of angels.

2. Ode 2. Of the heavenly vault.

You are God Almighty, the Most High Creator, the only Master of all things, and the Overseer of all, who wisely governs all things by Your providence, each bearing its proper end. We know You to be the infinite beginning and end of all good, surpassing all in nature, knowledge, and goodness, infinitely powerful, and infinitely transcending every kind of being. You are the life of the living and the light of all that shines. In You, all things move and exist and are true. You alone exist for Yourself, and all else exists for Your sake. You alone are unbegotten and eternal. In three Persons, You are one God, O Lord, and the Trinity of Persons is one in essence, without confusion, without division, and without passion. You have revealed this to Your children, O Father. Therefore, believing in You as God and Father, the only-begotten Word, and the all-holy Spirit, who proceed from You and abide in You, we hymn You, one God and Lord in Trinity. In such a Trinity, O Lord, You established the chain of diverse natures, willing it so, and from it sprang forth Your work, which did not exist before.

3. Ode 3. You, O Christ, are my Lord.

You, O Most High King, counted humanity among existing things, honoring it especially after the simple nature of the angels, and graciously granted Your children to be called Your sons, desiring them to live according to reason and law. But we, foolish from the start, transgressed the law and justly fell from all things. We exchanged the goodwill of our life for the enemy instead of the Savior, and we gave the reverence due to You, our Master, to servants. O the great love of Your compassion, O merciful Father! You sent Your Word to save us by a means beyond nature. You sent the Spirit, the other Comforter. Thus, the enemy was undone, and heaven was opened to those who desire to strive. O the double and greater kindness, O Father! You open again to repentant children the way to heaven, though it was closed by personal transgressions, and You add grace to those who unwaveringly choose and hasten on the path of Your Christ. Praise, song, glory, and worship are due to You, the ceaseless offering of grateful hymns, though all fall short of the worth of Your good gifts, even if one offers them most earnestly and sincerely. For who can grasp the infinite?

4. Ode 4. Why have You rejected me?

O Christ, my Jesus, glory to Your infinite majesty, glory to Your emptying, by which You filled the human race with sufferings. Glory to You for delivering it from error and terrible misery under the earth. You, the eternal Word of God, established all things, and having created man, You recreated him, paying the debt owed by him in the assumption of pure flesh. Human nature, divided, stretched out its hands and impiously

crucified its Savior, and now it is divided in an extraordinary way: one part kills Him, the other worships Him. But You endure, dispensing what is fitting to both. Those who believe again, some become conformed to You through works, while others are clothed in dead faith, lacking works. Like the latter, I, the wretched one, lie dead, four days old and stinking. Having done no good but every evil, I am rightly dead. But I flee to You, and You are able to give me life if You will. As You breathed a rational soul into my body, so enliven my soul with Your compassion. In the anguish of my heart, I beseech Your goodness, O my Christ. Do not allow my soul to be bitterly tormented in the fire of Gehenna, granting this to the all-pure Mother who intercedes for me.

5. Ode 5. Have mercy on me, O Savior.

O Virgin, Mother of God, who has become our advocate after God, no mother or father has cared for us so much. Through You, common blessings have been bestowed on the race. Deliver me from terrible diseases; You have freed me from many dangers at sea and on land, filled me with rest, and driven away the visible and invisible assaults of enemies. Now those whom You know, O Lady, or rather those who act against themselves, killing their own souls while singing of their height in all injustice, plot against us. But we pray for them. They hope to benefit us with lies and deliver us from what we have had enough of, wallowing in the mud, tormented by the terrible deformities of the race. But if it seems good to God that I die for the truth, let His will be done. Yet beseech Him wisely to grant me all things for purification. Plant true repentance and love for divine laws in my soul above all, O Lady, driving away demons and strengthening me with the guidance of good angels.

6. Ode 6. Hebrew children in the furnace.

First after God, the incorporeal and intellectual beings speak, fulfilling their nature and order in the universe. With blessed thoughts after God, they accomplish our life. Serving all the divine providence over all things in good order, they rejoice with God Himself and receive honor and hymns from men, holding the second place. Angels, the ninth order, standing over the lives of each person, be with me, living and changing, as guardians and pursuers of demons. Angel, guardian of my soul, do not despise me, who have sinned terribly, but attend to me now, repenting late, and guide my life to the harbor of salvation. The lot of the blessed is not even hoped for by me, who have grievously neglected it. But in the last portion of the pitied, arrange me by Your compassionate zeal, O Christ.

7. Ode 7. The furnace heated seven times.

You showed the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world to men, running before Him and baptizing Him in the waters, though He wished to immerse Himself in the ancestral curse in which He did not share. Now assist me, who need a second purification, with Your intercession, O most blessed John. The assembly of prophets, rejoicing with the Forerunner of grace, grant him due reverence, as one who saw and served the common salvation visibly, appearing to you long ago. Through him, obtain divine compassion for me. O disciples and heralds of Him who recreated us, with your blood and labors you sowed the whole earth for Him, whose fruit filled even heaven, once deprived of the spirits that had fallen. Through you, I too am a servant of Christ, though unworthy. Make me earnest. The steadfastness of the martyrs, beginning with Christ and the apostles, strongly nourished the truth on earth, confirmed by extraordinary miracles. Confirm our faith, O noble ones, and anoint it with the oil of your prayers, strengthening it against death. Orders of hierarchs, some of whom became sacrifices, emulating Christ who consecrated them, for the Lord, the first

High Priest, offered Himself for us. Now standing before Him, the Master of the world, seek forgiveness for my humble soul. Others who manfully defended piety, coming from various orders, overthrew the falsehood of impious heresies with tongues and books, enduring the manifold temptations of those who devised these ideas, so that the light of orthodoxy might shine in the world. Martyrs in peace, who crucified their flesh out of love for Christ and purified their souls, weaving the crown of love in the narrow path of crucifixion, now be filled with Him whom you fervently desired, and fervently ask His great compassion for us. You also glorified the weak nature of women, perfecting strength in weakness. Now they rejoice with martyr bands and ascetic orders, having nobly followed their choices. Through their supplications, establish saving strength in me, O my God.

8. Ode 8. They were astonished at this.

I return to You, the Creator, for from You I began, and like a needle drawn to a magnet by the condescension of Your Son, through whom the orders of the bright spirits were raised from the earth, I turn my word again to You, the triple circle, encompassing all within. O co-eternal Word of God, who, O wonder, also became man for us, it is the same to entreat You and the Father and the other Comforter. Therefore, instead of supplication, I offer You Your cross, which You willingly took, giving Yourself as a ransom for sinners. I present to You a God-befitting Mother, who shared in Your suffering for us, and after her, a host of angels and those equal to angels from earth, conformed to Your sufferings. With so many interceding, receive me as the thief, the tax collector, and the prodigal. O greatest and all-good King, all things lie in Your will and under Your yoke. But with such glorious intercession for me, a blessed and beloved multitude, may Your justice not be weighed down, but Your compassion, which pervades all nature, prevail. I have no righteousness at all, for my life is full of folly, and the burden of my evils has overwhelmed me, and I am filled with the stench of my wounds. Yet I dare to approach, O my Christ, trusting in Your love, for which You died for us. And now I bring my spirit, committing it into Your hands, O merciful Master. Therefore, cleanse and save me as You know. As for life, I am utterly carefree. Let it be or cease according to Your will, for I have joyfully entrusted the whole lot of my life to Your divine providence. For Your children above all, O Christ, You established an unexpected Church after the most just penalties. Now strengthen it, terribly shaken. Set it aright again, as in evil times, near the end, and give heavenly zeal to those who strive for it.

IN HONOR OF PALAMAS

XIII. Canon in Honor of Gregory Palamas.

† To Our Holy Father and Wonderworker Gregory, Archbishop of Thessalonica, the Palamite, a Canon.

1. Second Tone. Ode 1. Come, O people, let us sing.

May the grace of the Spirit that shone upon you now come upon us as we weave a hymn to you, O father, enriched by you as a wise shepherd and pillar of piety. Only you could worthily praise yourself, adorned with the grace of speech, but out of love, we dare to attempt what is beyond our strength. The sun illuminates the whole earth, but the rays of your wise doctrines enlighten the hearts of the faithful, dispelling the fog of impiety. After much labor in asceticism, you raised your pure heart to unassuming contemplation, in which you beheld God, O Father Gregory. Deliver us from the terrible storm that now afflicts us through your mediation, with the great martyr as a fellow intercessor and the wise shepherd, O Lady.

2. Ode 2. On the rock of faith, You strengthened me.

Your life shone brightly, O father; your words resounded louder than trumpets. You amazed those who saw your miracles and showed unwavering zeal for the faith against its adversaries. You grieved no one who approached you but were gentle and meek to all. You only shamed Akindynos, who glorified falsehood, and crushed him like a rock dashed against your orthodox faith. Behold, the light of the heavenly kingdom justly shines upon you, for you courageously defended it against those who call it a temporary creation—alas, their folly! They are justly covered in darkness. The offspring of serpents, whom you destroyed, again oppress the Church. But with the arrows of your wise words, which you left us as an inalienable inheritance, we put them to death, O holy father. Restrain the unstable impulse of the godless against Your servants, O Theotokos, and grant us a day of freedom, releasing us from the wrath with which we are chastised, paying the penalty for terrible transgressions.

3. Ode 3. I hymn You with my hearing.

You healed the ailments of bodies and souls, and multitudes of the faithful were amazed, seeing God work miracles through you. Therefore, deliver us also from double infirmities, O father, through your intercession. The Lord adorned your soul with many talents, and you increased them by keeping good watch over them. Therefore, He set you over many and numbered you among His faithful servants. Barlaam, the babbler, has flowed away, and the danger of Akindynos has melted like wax in fire. But you, O father, have now received heavenly joy with the righteous. You renounced worldly friendship and pleasure as if you were incorporeal, bore the cross of Christ, and became a great light. Therefore, you are set on the lampstand and have brightened the souls of all. You removed the reproach and pains of our foremother, giving birth to God incarnate without passion or labor pains. Therefore, Gabriel reverently greeted you with "Rejoice," O all-blameless one.

4. Ode 4. The Giver of light and all things.

Guiding your rational flock to pious pastures, you showed yourself to be of the right hand. Therefore, the good Shepherd in heaven has gloriously received you. Behold now with kindness your flock, and deliver it

from fierce beasts, for you kept watch over it while living in the body. Now you have greater boldness there. An ascetic among ascetics, a blameless priest among priests, a teacher among teachers, and a radiant martyr in intention and deed among martyrs, you shine forth. You became an exact interpreter, a sound theologian, a writer of wondrous words, and a model and standard of every virtue, O God-minded Gregory. O Virgin, who once delivered mortals from the throat of Satan by your childbirth, now deliver your servants from beasts that tear apart souls and bodies.

5. Ode 5. In the abyss of sins.

You walked a safe path, O father, which the much-endangered Akindynos avoided, perishing in an impassable wilderness and precipices. You became a follower of Gregory, who theologized the light as divinity, which our Lord revealed hidden on Tabor. Jonah was in the whale for three days, but you, suffering in prisons and chains for many days, turned many unbelievers to the faith by your wisdom. The gloom of circumstances could not weaken your steadfastness for the faith. Standing unshaken, you refuted the foreign glory. All the God-inspired proclaimed you truly the Theotokos, O all-pure one, by whose life-giving streams the bitterness of souls is washed away.

6. Ode 6. The golden image in the furnace.

From childhood, you rejected a soft and lax life and chose the harshness of Athos for your ascetic struggles. There you drank heavenly water flowing from a spring and poured out rivers of life for all. The choirs of martyrs and saints rightly rejoice in your memory, whose festivals you adorned with your words. Knowing you as a fellow ascetic and fellow struggler among the first, they surround your soul with joy. You refuted the absurd arguments of Akindynos, O father, armed with the breastplates of the teachers, and you raised a conspicuous trophy against them, as a true hierarch of Christ's Church. The orthodox mind, inflamed, drives away foreign thoughts like a breeze scattering fragrance. But the humble in heart are enlightened by truth, enclosed in the orthodox laws of the fathers. O Virgin, your childbirth renewed our nature, which had become withered from the beginning, and made it flourish again, now bearing wondrous fruit. The great purity by which you served God for our sake is hymned.

7. Ode 7. The one in the furnace of fire.

Behold, all things are in turmoil because of evil schemers, O father. But send a steady calm from God, and let the ancestral doctrines remain true and alone forever. The cross and sufferings are the signs of the faithful. Therefore, the onslaught of misfortunes cannot shake the wise, for no one who belongs to the Lord, victorious over temptations, can be overcome by trials. We cannot celebrate your memory as we ought, O God-minded one, for we bear the yoke of slavery on our necks. Yet we bring you a heartfelt hymn from what we have. Cast down the arrogant thoughts that rise against us, O father, with heavenly power, and establish the ancestral faith on a solid rock, shown to be most upright by all evidence. Behold, O Mother of God, the great martyr has Gregory, the great shepherd, as a fellow intercessor for us. With them, you can quickly drive away every adversary from us.

IN HONOR OF PALAMAS

8. Ode 8. The Word of God, God from God.

The strong towers of the Church, having truly revered the Word of God from God, fortified it with much labor and sweat and many demonstrations of words, among whom the divine Gregory is now honored foremost. Like a deer longing for the spring of immortality, our good hierarch found it after many circuits and, abundantly filled with its life-giving streams, appeared as an inexhaustible sea of divine graces. You were seen as a two-edged sword, cutting down the novel ideas of wicked slanderers, who falsely accused the wise theologians of dividing God's essence from His divine energy by mere thought. We are all filled with lamentation and tears, seeing the Church of Christ again terribly oppressed. But grant it the former calm through your prayers and a firm proclamation of the ancestral doctrines. O Virgin Theotokos, the hosts of angels and the choirs of all the saints now honor you with all honors, as the ineffable Mother of the Creator for our sake, and we magnify you in hymns with one accord.

TO JOHN HIS DICIPLE

Correspondence A. Letters Signed: "Georges Scholarios" (Before the End of the Year 1450).

I. To John, His Disciple.

† George Scholarius to his Disciple John.

1.Although your previous letter did not reach me while the courier was still on Chios, as I believe, in which you seem to have set forth at length the questions you wish to explore concerning the soul—a matter for which we might justly have deferred the discussion until the arrival of that letter, which I still await—nevertheless, since from your subsequent letters, which arrived before the earlier ones, I have almost divined what you wish to learn about the soul (and you have done well, indeed, not to trust your desire to a single letter but to employ many for this purpose), I, though enjoying little leisure due to the circumstances of the times and, even in this leisure, hating and avoiding all those usual discourses and preserving my mind pure from all confusion, will nevertheless attempt to write to you about such matters for the sake of our friendship. I will not write as much as would satisfy you, given your love for such topics, even if I were to provide all that is available or even more for one who seeks, nor as much as the subject deserves. For the question is not simple but manifold and complex, encompassing almost everything one might inquire or raise as a difficulty concerning the soul against Aristotle. A whole treatise would be required if one were to respond adequately and appropriately to all these points. Therefore, I will not write so much or in such detail, but I will touch upon all that you have asked while avoiding prolixity, even if some of it is necessary, since I intend to send you not a book but a letter, as the present time does not permit more, nor will I address each of your inquiries individually but will instead offer a simple and concise account of Aristotle's views on the soul, particularly as they relate to your questions. From this, you, like a wise man, may gather and appreciate the specific points you have inquired about, as they are suited to the occasion and, I might add, to the sender. I know that you will be grateful to me for fulfilling your desire. If you wish to learn more, you may seek out Aristotle himself, the teacher of this subject, and his commentators. You may also hear from me directly at some point, since this too is a matter of prayer for me—to see and be seen—and I believe it is the same for you.

2.Know, therefore, that among those who have written about the soul, Aristotle is the one who has spoken most extensively and accurately on the subject. He has refuted the false opinions of others concerning the soul and has omitted nothing that can truly be said about it. However, in some parts of his discussions on the soul, he is thought to have missed the truth for two reasons. First, his discourses on the soul are profound and require a wise listener—for the man is always such, but especially in these matters, given the complexity of the subject, both because of the multifaceted nature of the soul and even more so because of the intricate and varied nature of the rational and human soul. For this reason, not all have been able to follow well what he has said, and thus they have thought that he has strayed from the truth in some places. Second, many of his commentators, taking Alexander of Aphrodisias as a kind of standard, have misunderstood Aristotle's words just as Alexander did, though he erred. Some have been misled by their trust in Alexander, who is among the older commentators and is otherwise considered talented and knowledgeable, while Alexander himself was first led astray by his own errors and misconceptions about the soul, corrupting

Aristotle's obscurity and thinking it would go unnoticed if he dragged the Philosopher toward his own opinions, thus doing more harm than good in his interpretation. But Simplicius among the Greeks, and all the Latins, especially Thomas Aquinas, who far surpasses Simplicius in both purity and wisdom, have freed the Philosopher from Alexander's distortions and have shown him to be in harmony with the truth and with himself in all respects, so that even his genuine listeners can believe that Aristotle says nothing other than what the universal faith holds concerning the soul. This, then, is what you should know about Aristotle and persuade others of, relying for now on me and the wise men in both languages, and perhaps someday using irrefutable arguments when you have engaged with Aristotle's discourses on the soul or with sound interpretations, following true and wise commentators, among whom is Thomas, whose commentaries on the treatise on the soul I am now interpreting and, God willing, will soon complete and share with you, having taken care to transcribe and send them to you.

3.Hear also a few things about the definition and the other matters you have inquired about. Aristotle, intending to speak about the soul as a whole before discussing each kind individually (for there are three kinds of souls: the vegetative, the sensitive, and the rational, of which the rational does not use a bodily organ by itself, the sensitive both needs and uses one, though not necessarily bodily qualities that are productive or active for its operations, and the vegetative acts with such organs and cannot otherwise function)—before, therefore, examining the specific differences of these souls, he considers what is common to them all by means of a definition, a true definition and not a homonymous account, as all the Greek commentators think. For the soul is predicated synonymously of all its kinds, just as the definition of an animal applies to all species of animals, and every soul is the actuality of a natural organic body. For even if the intellect, the most honorable power of the soul and that by which the rational soul differs from the others, is not the actuality of a body nor has a distinct organ, as Aristotle says, yet the whole rational soul is the actuality of a body, since it also uses other powers besides the intellect and governs the composite not by the intellect alone. For this reason, this definition applies well to the rational and intellectual soul, even if one of its powers is not the actuality of a body in itself. For in another sense, the intellect is also an actuality because the soul's substance is an actuality, of which the intellect is a part. Having thus given this common account of the soul and derived from it what is common to every soul, he turns to the consideration of the specific differences.

4.But for now, there is no discussion of those matters; instead, we must examine the definition. "Actualization" (ἐντελέχεια) is called the continuous and uninterrupted motion, as in the proverb "Dripping water hollows out a stone." But the soul is not such an actualization. Rather, "actuality" (ἐντελέχεια) is the activity and perfection of a thing, or, to speak more precisely, the form of a thing insofar as it is the activity and perfection of the thing, as the name itself indicates. For "actuality" is, as it were, "having the end within," that is, that by which each thing fully possesses its being, particularly composite things in which potentiality exists. The more general genus of the soul is substance. But since substance is spoken of in three ways and is considered in the inquiry of the natural philosopher and in division—for substance is either matter, form, or the composite—of these, matter is potentiality, or, more accurately, capacity; form is actuality; and the composite is actuality. I think you already perceive what actuality itself is and what it means to be in actuality. Since substance is spoken of in three ways, and since Aristotle wishes to say that the soul is the form of the ensouled body and that the body is the matter of the soul insofar as it can be conceived as not yet ensouled or informed, he takes the proximate genus and includes the more general within it. For by saying "actuality,"

he means nothing other than substance as form, with which he also disputes Plato, who calls the soul a substance but does not consider it the form of the body, only the mover of the body, like the pilot of a ship. But since he calls it an actuality and a form, and since in the definitions of such forms the matter must also be included, as in the case of accidents and their substrates, he adds "of a body." For being a form, it must be the form of something, and it is the form of a body, and indeed of a natural body, since the soul is the cause of the substance, that is, of the composite, while the mathematical body is not a substance, nor is the artificial body, which is not a substance but a shape, size, or something of that sort, or all of these together. For art imposes such things, none of which are substances. Therefore, "natural" is added to distinguish it from the artificial and the mathematical. And it is not simply "natural" but "capable of possessing life." For life belongs to the soul, and that which partakes of it neither has life nor is incapable of life but must be capable of receiving life, and not all things indiscriminately, but those that are perfected by the soul. The soul is the actuality of a body capable of possessing life. For even the mortal body, though already living, is potentially an animal, since it is not naturally united to itself but receives life episodically through the presence of the soul. Then, explaining what "capable of possessing life" might mean, he says that such a body is organic, for the two necessarily coincide, since a body capable of possessing life is an organ of the soul, and the organ of the soul is capable of possessing life. For the proximate organ of the soul must live so that, through life, it may be joined to the moving soul without violence and be aroused solely by the soul's impulse. That these two follow each other is clear from Aristotle's synthesis of the definition of the soul, where, having said "organic," he did not add "capable of possessing life," using "organic" instead. Hence, the definition of the soul would sufficiently be: "The actuality of a natural organic body," or, if one prefers, "The actuality of a natural body capable of possessing life." All ensouled bodies are organic, whether of humans, animals, or plants, though some have more or fewer organs, simpler or more complex, according to the difference in their souls. For the more perfect the soul, the more numerous and varied the organs, as in the case of a plant, which has organs that are also parts of it, such as the leaf, which is a covering for the fruit; the pericarp, which is a covering for the seed; and the root, which is like the mouth of an animal, for through both the root and the mouth nourishment is drawn. The Philosopher derived this definition from this division, as you yourself might discern. He divided substance into body and incorporeal, and body into natural and non-natural, that is, artificial and mathematical; and natural body again into that which is capable of possessing life and that which is not. "Capable," because every body, even if ensouled, possesses life potentially; for it does not have life in itself but through the soul within it. Know that the intellect, though the same as its substrate, both in actuality and in potentiality, and one and the same power in the soul, is called and is potential intellect when it is incomplete and lacking knowledge, but when perfected, it is called actual intellect and becomes productive intellect. Both are immortal according to Aristotle, though his detractors slander him even here. Since the intellect is immortal, the rational soul, which is most properly according to the intellect (for the other powers of the soul belong more to the composite), is also immortal and indestructible. But I fear to say anything further about the intellect and the complex theory concerning it at present, for this subject, if any in philosophy, is difficult to grasp and requires much time, discourse, and living voice for comprehension. Let this suffice for you.

5.This is in response to one of your requests; for the other, the same effort will be applied, since to accomplish that also requires more than mere desire, as with the present matter, but also a scribe, a good one,

some time, truth, and perhaps other things, which, when they come together (though it is not easy for them to do so), the rest of your demands or requests will be fulfilled. But you should always ask for such things, so splendid and fitting for you to seek and for me to give. If you add what will require labor and expense, we will not be less grateful to you in these matters but will perform them with the same pleasure and eagerness, considering the one who makes the request as a true friend.

TO HIS DICIPLES

II. To His Disciple.

† George Scholarius to his Disciples.

1.I would have wished for you to remain with me always and to enjoy the good things I have to offer, if indeed I possess anything worthy to give to those who approach me with goodwill. For I know that even for me, my association with you is not without profit and pleasure. Since it is necessary to acquire some discourses and to make others more firmly established, one who occupies the position of a teacher benefits from others, and it is naturally pleasant to associate with those who love learning and who value even the most trivial things highly because of their affection. Some of you also possess other virtues and a demeanor that provides no small reason for being loved, so that even if for no other reason, you would be esteemed by any man of even modest intelligence. If I were to feel this way toward each of you individually, having chosen to draw near to me personally, how much more should I care for all of you when you come together, sharing the same mind and zeal? Yet, though I honor your presence and companionship so highly and desire to assist you in the ways I appear to do, I find fortune opposing me, diverting my desire, stirring up calculations and circumstances that might even lead me to pray for death. I risk appearing envious and wholly unsuited for friendship in your eyes, unless a discerning judge of my intentions sits in judgment, able to render a favorable verdict based on many past experiences. I believe you will also hear from others that I am like Euripus, unstable and pleased with nothing for long—things I neither wished to hear nor to seem, but since wretched fortune insists on troubling me, I must endure all things. Yet, to me, the most grievous of all these things is the inability to help my friends and to practice my art. Though I have derived little benefit from it, I have never preferred anything else. Nor am I so unyielding in soul and able to endure all things that, while considering how to please you, I can disregard the arrows of fortune as if they were aimed at someone else. If another might have laughed at these things, they cause me great turmoil, for I am naturally inclined to yield to the shadows of troubles, and another might prove the excesses of misfortunes to be weak, but suffering is my constant companion. What might I suffer, overcome by these troubles? But perhaps every man is led by his preconceptions, and his pleasures and pains are measured by his imagination, which itself has no fixed magnitude. Yet, the obstacles are no excuse, nor is it right to blame fortune untimely, even if I wished to remain silent. For the One who sees all will bear witness from above that I both desire and would pray to be able to grant you all that is possible, and I believe you would not deny this, having experienced sufficient proof of my affection in a short time.

2.As for your zeal for learning and your desire, if possible, for all to partake of the good of discourse, while grieving that no one else contributes and that the art of discourse has not advanced as much in the common good as I happen to believe, I do not know how I could offer better proofs than those already provided. For I do not think highly of myself in matters of discourse, first because I am aware that I am surpassed by many others, when I compare my nature and zeal to each of them as if to a standard and perceive their superiority. Second, even if I could surpass all and attain the highest honors in discourse, I would consider it no great achievement to surpass the best in being, not simply the best, just as no one would reasonably boast of seeing better than those who have had their eyes gouged out. Moreover, even if one were equal to Aristotle and Plato, I do not think he should boast, since neither the wise man in his wisdom nor

others in their excellences should boast, as David teaches. Furthermore, seeing that all good repute is destroyed by death and that only the moral characters of those departing this world accompany them, I have never thought highly of myself for the sake of discourse. Yet, I consider those who are truly devoted to discourse to bring no small adornment to cities, and the benefit they provide through discourse surpasses all other goods. For discourse alone is the father of all private and public good. It legislates, arranges, crowns virtue, and punishes vice, and by adorning the manners of each as much as possible, it reveals the entire moral character of the city as good. It judges, deliberates, and conducts embassies skillfully. It is directly responsible for preserving peace well and for using arms opportunely. It civilizes men, whom some define by the gentleness of their nature, and it prepares them to be what they are said to be more truly. It makes them political, eager for glory, indifferent to bodily dangers, and wholly abstaining from pleasures. As for the arts, without which no city could be established or preserved, who is ignorant that discourse is their source? Discourse alone can discover and preserve the honors due to the divine, and there is no way to attain future happiness except through discourse, since even those who sought it without discourse have left us an example of life for those who strive for it with discourse. Thus, discourse is a common good. Hence, it should rule human affairs, and all things should be led and moved by it. I believe that discourse, naturally inherent in the first men, entrusted them with authority over all, but when it was corrupted by sin, it immediately ceased to have its due honor. And now, though there are cities in the world that are led by discourse, there was a time when they were led much better, and those devoted to discourse either managed public affairs in the cities or prepared those who would do so and exposed those who erred in any matter, not as here, where we appoint as judges, shepherds of souls, and teachers those who bear ignorance and the vice that accompanies it as a badge of honor, and every seat is truly a plague, and the masters of all are those who know nothing except to slander and destroy their neighbors. If any remain who share in intelligence and wisdom, they seem to me to have been utterly cast aside. Not only in republics but even among tyrants of some intelligence, one might see discourse held in esteem. Philip, for example, said that he most desired to surpass others in experience of the best things or in power, since many have acquired power without discourse, and many have lost it for lack of discourse.

3.Since discourse is of such importance, we must consider those devoted to it as worthy of great honor, since they have chosen to spend their entire lives attending to the best of human pursuits and to common goods. This race of men once adorned our city, and it was a city of discourse, as it is now a city of ruins. But when all wealth fled from it, the wealth of goods with which it once abounded, the beauty of discourse could not endure in its misfortune, or rather, while it is still adorned with the remnants of other goods, the honor that comes from discourse has been left to it only in appearance, and even this appearance will one day cease, when time exposes the ignorance that has overtaken it. Some races of Italians, once counted among the barbarians by us, now excel in the sciences of discourse, or rather, they add new discoveries to what already exists, while books are a burden to us, or rather, we have betrayed even these to those who can use them, so that if we are ever to take up discourse nobly and attempt all that has been neglected, we must seek books from abroad to aid us in our purpose. Some care for our language, and the mere appearance of speaking Greek is a source of great honor to them, while we do not understand our own tongue, and now among the Italians, the Greeks are better than those here. I will speak the truth, even if the slanderers say a thousand times that I Latinize, they who, having no other way to express their hatred and envy, resort to slander and

consider the friendly to be hostile, and make enemies of those who would aid them in time of need. For I do not wish to praise the Latins myself, but I would have wished that all the glory for better things belonged to my fellow citizens, and that our teachers were the Latins, as they surely once were. But since the matter has been reversed, and as our diligence has waned, so has our glory, and they have inherited it, I will consider it unjust to the truth not to grant these men the praise they deserve.

4.But even though I admire their knowledge of discourse, I do not immediately consider them masters of the truth in doctrines, and just as in other wisdom, so also in the accuracy of faith, I declare that our people have less than they. For without any wisdom, we can resort to common opinions and in this alone defeat those who accuse us and prevail securely, yet still be unfortunate, because we cannot support our opinion with logical proofs and the strength of discourse. But not without tears am I led to admire them and to lament our own people, who have neglected what they care for, as if on purpose, with equal ability. For I cannot restrain myself when I consider the excess of the calamity. And how is it not a calamity, and beyond every calamity, that in so great a city there are only three or four devoted to discourse, and most of these take pleasure in appearance rather than truth? For them, introductions to the art suffice to appear as grammarians, avoiding solecisms and composing a discourse somehow or other has gained them the reputation of rhetoricians, and to say something about genus and species and to touch on logical methods at all is the same as being considered philosophers, and to practice and deliver discourses has persuaded all to regard them as theologians descended from God, and suddenly they are skilled at uniting the Churches. If only they would utter a small voice, not being thunderstruck by many syllogisms and discourses, to which both natural ability and art are necessary, or else they would not enter the gates of Hades, convinced that they are unprepared for the contests. When someone refutes them, knowing nothing, applying the rules of truth to them, he is considered a heretic and a Latin sympathizer. If he demands reasons for what they say, which they ought to provide if they were wise and not clinging to their opinions like myths, he is considered bold, arrogant, superfluous, and proud of his discourse.

5.Such are those among us who have assumed the embassy of discourse. But I wish they had left others like themselves. Now, time will snatch them away, and no successor will inherit their wisdom, small as it is, since no one cares how it might be preserved. Seeing this poverty and grieving for it much more than for the other misfortunes that have befallen us, I could not bear to keep my suffering silent, but I came forward and lamented the calamity, declaring that we who dwell in the hearth of discourse will soon differ in nothing from barbarians, since the art of discourse is so neglected, and that we risk being deprived not only of wisdom and learning but even of understanding our own language. Having stirred up all who have any concern for discourse, I declared that I myself am prepared to contribute what I can to help, and that others who ought to care for such things should join in the effort and do what lies in their power. I also proposed the method by which I thought I could advance the art of discourse. But since no one cared, I myself undertook the possible remedy, and to those I believed would bring worth, zeal, and nature to the art of discourse and would engage more nobly with philosophy, I offered myself, though I am by no means sufficiently qualified to lead them in philosophy and discourse, yet better than those who remain silent or no longer exist. For if there were someone worthy to open a school, I would not be ashamed to attend in the guise of a student and to reveal my soul as better to the theologians there. But since there is no one who would fulfill this desire for me and many others, I have taken on the role of a teacher, like one who is sick himself but, in the absence of

a doctor, treats those who are more seriously ill. And though there are many things for which I might have been moved without anyone blaming me, I have set aside my own labors and cares, which those devoted to discourse alone must bear, and have devoted all my strength to the common need, caring little for my own ease and safety. And I have helped some and intended to help others. And who is there who has shared the same training and fortune with me and, after me, will be able to do the same? Time might yet produce many such, enjoying my voice but increasing what they have received with their own diligence and labor.

6.And so I have acted thus. Yet no one praised me, though I would have been willing to remain silent if those who should have drawn me into these labors had done so. Nor did they show gratitude, though they ought to have woven immortal crowns for me. I will not mention that I even seemed to do wrong, and those who were pleased to hear my voice have earned hatred. But they will not, I think, enjoy the fruits of God, who rewards the labors of discourse and dispenses justice, placing those who are envied beyond the reach of envy's arrows. For this reason, I would have long remained silent, wishing to please the many, but I persevered until now, overcoming the obstacles of envy. Therefore, no one could say that I care little for advancing the art of discourse or that I am least troubled by the lack of culture among us, as if it were just another misfortune, and that I, like most, would prefer to claim the greatest share of glory in discourse amid the scarcity of fellow practitioners. How could I, who have neglected none of the things within my power, so that extinguished discourses might be rekindled and the love of discourse might flourish again? And how could I, though I have many sources of pleasure, lament constantly the neglect of the art of discourse beyond all expectation, with no one able to offer any good to those who would use and honor it? How often have I been moved by many worthy things, only to restrain myself, since I would have no witness to my labors? This is clear from what I have already accomplished, with no one willing to acknowledge it—for I could not say it myself. But indeed, even those who would assist in some good works, I have eagerly prepared for myself, but envy opposes and wars against me.

7.Since, therefore, I wish to grant you, as friends and beloved, all that I can, and since I have long cared to advance discourse so much, it is clear that the multitude of obstacles is no mere excuse, but in truth, though I am eager, I am hindered, and being hindered, I consider it the greatest misfortune. Of these obstacles, I would say nothing to you—for it is not permitted, nor do I think I would seem pleasant to friends by speaking of them, and even if I remain silent, the facts themselves will reveal them. For not only will I abstain from my zeal for discourse because of these things and impose silence on my tongue, knowing that silence is better when speaking would cause trouble, but I will also not hesitate, God willing, to change my way of life to a safer one, and then it will be clear to those who wish to understand what has caused my silence. But even if no other obstacle existed, it would be enough to persuade me to remain silent and renounce the finest discourses, seeing ignorance honored and discourse so terribly trampled upon, so that those who handle it seem to be accused of folly, while the more courageous and spirited teachers are thought to have no more worth than vulgar and uneducated men, and no one cares for the advancement of the chorus of the learned in the city or for preserving the adornment that comes from this art. If some have inscribed themselves into the company of the learned with much sweat and labor, caring for nothing else, as if they had fallen from heaven or risen from the earth, like the Giants of old, these men gain nothing from the common good, which even public thieves, adulterers, and traitors enjoy, nor do they perceive any help from discourse, and they seek those who will receive and support them. Others are envied and hated, as if

paying the penalty for their zeal for what is noble, and the best of human pursuits is considered nothing great, while the worse becomes the pretext for misfortune for those who choose it.

8.Who, seeing this, would himself take pleasure in discourse and advise others to do so? Who could endure so much labor, expecting no profit from his toil? Who would wish to teach the way of life from which one is destined to suffer misfortune, when it is possible to fare better by choosing ignorance and vice? I myself would have wished to receive worthy rewards for my labors and to incite others by my example to similar labors, so that they might attain the same rewards. But if my sins against God stand in my way and make life difficult on all sides, I would at least wish to see my art become a source of happiness for others and to seem to gain something from their successes. Then, having made less account of my own affairs, I would see how I too, contributing to those who love discourse, might share in the glory of my country and their good repute, and someone, perceiving the benefit of what has been laid down, might give thanks to the giver. But now I risk seeming an enemy to those I urged to care for discourse, and I will seem to advise all to do the same. Are these things not enough to persuade those who do not speak in vain to remain silent, or those who attend to teaching as if it were a game? But for now, these things do not advise me to remain silent. For I knew and grieved over these things before, but I soothed the inflammation of my soul with good hopes and comforted my displeasure with these things, as if many knew and honored me, and you would soon receive honors and crowns for your labors. Thus, I eagerly sought to assist you in your desire, preferring to share something good with you over the service and honor in the palace, though small, and often over food and sleep itself.

9.But now the tumult surrounds us on all sides, and we must care for our own, caring with God and placing His justice and providence before every weapon against the assaults of fortune. God will also care for you, granting the weight of the times to your desire for discourse. I have often foretold these things to you, reluctantly, foreseeing the future, and now I speak, though not gladly. But if, by God's kindness, all that troubles us is resolved, and you remain of the same mind and zeal, and no one fulfills my role for you better than I, my goodwill toward you and my love of discourse will persuade me to return to such labors, and I will place your benefit above all else.

TO JOHN ON THE SYLLOGISM

III. To John, His Disciple, on the Syllogism.

† To John, His Disciple: A Method by Which One May Easily Distinguish the Major and Minor Propositions, Both Those Present in Syllogisms and Those Missing.

1.Since a simple and proper syllogism consists of three terms and three intervals, of which two are propositions and the remaining third is the conclusion, it happens that all the terms are taken twice. For the three intervals cannot occur otherwise unless the terms are doubled, since an interval involves two terms. However, the middle term is never included in the conclusion, while each of the extreme terms is taken once in a proposition and once in the conclusion: the major term in the major proposition and in the conclusion, and the minor term in the minor proposition and in the conclusion. Therefore, since we sometimes reason without taking all the propositions but only one along with the conclusion—most often the major, though sometimes the minor—one may find that the majority of syllogisms in Aristotelian works are of this kind. Those who understand these Aristotelian syllogisms will, of course, reason similarly themselves, and they need no method for this. But for those who are not yet able to analyze or complete such syllogisms, assistance may be provided as follows. One must look at the conclusion and the given proposition. And since it has been said that the two extreme terms are doubled in the conclusion, having been taken once each in the propositions (each in its respective proposition), if the term predicated in the conclusion is the same as one of the terms in the given proposition, then the proposition is the major. For the term predicated in the conclusion is always the same as the major term, which is either predicated in the proposition (as in the first and third figures) or is the subject in the second figure. If, however, it is not the term predicated in the conclusion but the subject in the conclusion that is the same as one of the terms in the given proposition, then the proposition is the minor. For the subject in the conclusion is always the same as the minor term, which is either the subject in the proposition (as in the first and second figures) or is predicated (as in the third figure). And when it is clear which proposition is given, the missing proposition immediately becomes evident, and when it is added, the syllogism is completed. For if the given proposition is the major, the non-doubled term of the proposition, together with the non-doubled term of the conclusion, forms the minor proposition. If the given proposition is the minor, the non-doubled term of the proposition, together with the non-doubled term of the conclusion, forms the major proposition. For the sake of example, let us demonstrate the following: that the heavens are not in a place, and we say thus: "The heavens are not in a place, for there is no body outside them," that is, outside the heavens. Here, the conclusion is stated first: "The heavens are not in a place," in which "the heavens" is the subject and "in a place" is the predicate. Then follows the proposition: "There is no body outside," in which "body outside" is the predicate and "the heavens" is the subject. Since, therefore, the subject in the conclusion is the same as one of the terms in this proposition, which also happens to be the subject of the proposition, the proposition is the minor. If you connect the predicate of this proposition, namely "body outside," with the predicate of the conclusion, namely "in a place," you will discover the major proposition. For the major proposition is: "Everything in a place has a body outside it." And thus the syllogism is completed. (See the diagram.) For if everything in a place has a body outside it, and there is no body outside the heavens, then the heavens are not in a place. Again, let us demonstrate the following: that the heavens are in a place, and we say thus: "The heavens are in

a place"—this is the conclusion. "Everything that moves in place is in a place"—this is the proposition. In this proposition, one of the terms, namely "in a place," which happens to be the predicate of the proposition, is the same as one of the terms in the conclusion, the predicate. Therefore, the proposition is the major. If you connect the subject of the proposition, namely "that which moves in place," with the subject of the conclusion, namely "the heavens," you will discover the minor proposition. For the minor proposition is: "The heavens move in place." And thus the syllogism is completed. For if the heavens move in place, and everything that moves in place is in a place, then the heavens are in a place. This rule will always indicate the given proposition and, consequently, the one that is omitted.

TO THE SAME

IV. The Same to the Same (1435/1436).

† To the Same.

1.The plague that has ravaged this place has wronged us in many ways, and as if to crown our misfortunes, it has added your departure, depriving us of the dearest sight of you prematurely and forcing a man who loves us and is devoted to learning to prefer a city that can offer him no such advantages, while our own city, besieged by so many terrible afflictions—not only those coming from elsewhere but also its own internal burdens—is left in a state of distress. But may the plague cease to oppress us and turn its attention more closely to the enemies of the truth—or rather, to speak more truly, may the shame of sin, for which the loving Judge exacts punishment through plague and other calamities, perish. As for you, you act rightly and in a manner worthy of our hopes, remembering our past companionship and adding tokens of remembrance. You write less frequently than our desire would wish, for even if you did so daily, you could never fully satisfy it. Yet your letters come with an acknowledged excuse for their rarity, one that cannot be dismissed, and you recall the good things you say you have enjoyed among us, expressing gratitude for them, though you owe far less than you acknowledge. Then you send us gifts from land and sea, leaving out nothing that belongs to friendship. But we, who would have been most content to ask only that you remember us, love us, and send letters, would not have been troubled by the neglect of all else, nor will we ever complain if such things are done. For we hold your friendship in the highest esteem, as you know, and we cherish whatever you deem worthy and rejoice whenever it is preserved in every way. Though I have much to say about the letters you send, I will only say this: they seem to surpass the writings of many who pride themselves on their learning, and anyone who reads them would come away with a clear understanding of your nature, even if they had not known you before. I rejoice in your natural ability and zeal, and I pray that you may find the opportunity to make use of us and many others to the best of our ability and to drink deeply from the streams of philosophy, which I count among the most sacred things in life and which I believe you also hold in high esteem.

2.As for the most excellent and illustrious lord of Mytilene, whom I admire and love for all the good qualities that every mouth proclaims he possesses in abundance, I cannot express how much gratitude I owe him for his goodwill toward learning. On the one hand, I myself enjoy a share of this honor, being devoted to learning and captivated by its beauty. On the other hand, I consider it my duty to uphold all honor due to those like him through our shared fellowship. Such things do not strike me as unusual, for he possesses a genuine, not an acquired, abundance of all good things, and as the heir of his ancestors' virtue in other respects, it is fitting that he should emulate their love of learning, for they made those close to them among the learned of their time most fortunate through honors and gifts. Therefore, honoring and admiring him, I would pray that he does not remain unaware of my feelings. This, then, is something you will consider, and Laskaris, that most excellent man, will also arrange it. He has most gladly made known to us the goodwill of the sender and will not conceal our reciprocal feelings. He will also inform you fully about the synod, for we have nothing to add to what he already knows. In addition, he will tell you how the terrible plague has abated, so that you may cease to fear and tremble on our account and for your return here, which I believe you will now seek, if ever, spurred by the hopes of unity.

TO THE SAME

V. To the Same (End of 1435).

† To the Same.

1.From your most longed-for letter, which arrived at an opportune time, I was informed of your safe return, your subsequent health, and all your affairs, and I rejoiced and gave thanks to God. I also greatly appreciated the content of the letter, seeing it as worthy of your knowledge, your friendship, and our hopes for you. As for what you need to know about our goodwill or what you should be grateful for on our behalf, these things are always superfluous, since our mutual friendship is already acknowledged and no longer requires words. At this time, they would be even more unnecessary and redundant, as other matters compel us to speak and you to hear things of greater urgency.

2.Know, then, brother, that the matter of union seems to be progressing in some way. The emperor has approved and ratified the actions taken by his ambassadors at the council, after many discussions involving the emperor himself, the patriarch, the Church, and certain other individuals of repute, both secular and ecclesiastical, among whom I was also compelled to participate along with the three ambassadors of the council. These ambassadors include one who is a teacher of theology from Raoul, the second a teacher of law, Francis, and the third a bachelor of theology, Alaman. During these discussions, certain difficulties arose on our side, which, being weaker, presented more obstacles, but they were resolved by the council's ambassadors, who also promised further resolutions. Now, one of the ambassadors, Francis, will depart with the galleys, accompanied by one of our Greeks (I do not yet know who, as it has not been announced), to inform the council of what has been done and ratified here and to determine the place where the assembly of both Churches will take place. For, although many places have been proposed by the council, it is for us to make the final selection. They will also determine the time for the emperor's departure and that of our Church—I mean the Eastern Church—to those regions. In my opinion, this will likely be in the spring following the next one, since the current ambassadors are expected to return only by next August, bringing with them funds, galleys, and other assistance that we requested and the council promised, so that the Eastern Church may safely travel there and safely leave these regions. In the meantime, the two ambassadors remaining here will issue instructions through which the emperor will gather the patriarchs and bishops of the Eastern Church or their representatives, using his own ambassadors. I believe that after the departure of the Venetian galleys, the emperor will begin sending such embassies.

3.Christophoros came to show that the pope consents to the proceedings of the Council of Basel out of necessity, since we, having mishandled the matter, rejected the path of union that the pope had proposed and which he had determined last year through Christophoros, namely that the council should be held in Constantinople. For the pope, desiring union above all, wished it to take place through the easier and safer path, which would also be more beneficial to us and perhaps to himself. But since we, abandoning this path, chose another—that of the council, so that it might take place among the Latins and in whatever place the council chooses, perhaps even beyond the Pillars of Hercules—the pope, not wishing to appear opposed to the matter, has for now consented to the less favored path, saying, "Let the matter proceed, and I will not dispute the means, as long as the end is achieved. Let the means to the end be arranged as one wishes, though the terms we proposed were better and more likely to lead to the end."

TO THE SAME

4.But there is a great difficulty regarding the place. For the council to take place outside Italy, where the emperor perhaps desires it for reasons I do not fully understand, is something the council insists on, but it does not please the pope at all. He considers it highly advantageous for both himself and the matter that the Council of Basel be transferred to Italy under the pretext of the council for union, where he can also be physically present. I do not know how this difficulty will be resolved by the emperor, so that this divine work does not falter because of it—something I greatly fear. Given the constraints of the letter, I write this to you, for though I know much about these matters, I could not fully explain them to you directly even in many days, much less in writing. For now, Christophoros has done his part, showing the difficulty regarding the place but otherwise affirming the pope's consent, and he will depart with the galleys.

5.May God bring the matter of union, which is in this state, to a favorable conclusion through His compassion. For as I consider the many difficulties, perhaps more than most others, it seems humanly impossible and nearly unachievable.

6.My most illustrious and excellent lord, having not yet concluded his affairs, seems likely to winter here. He is in his monastery, that of the Pantokrator, sharing with us abundant love, honor, and assurance, and we, in turn, would gladly offer our very souls for his benefit, thus rendering him all possible goodwill. The emperor, either out of recent kindness or moved by some reasoning, wished to extend some favor to us, which we, perhaps seeing it as ineffective or for other reasons, did not accept, even if it was noble. Thus, we remain as we were, or rather, in even greater inactivity. For today marks twenty days since we completely ceased our contributions to his projects, avoiding the turmoil and labor that bring us no pleasure.

7.The goodwill of the pope and our hopes in him were greatly confirmed by Christophoros's visit here. Thus, with the pope's approval and our shared approval—not only for the same reasons but also for others—we will winter here and have promised to arrive at the beginning of spring. For we will then arrive more opportunely, God willing, and unless the great goodwill of our lord prevents it—for he wishes to keep us close—we will simply winter here. In spring, God will guide us as to what we should do, as we hope through His great compassion. For now, with affairs still unsettled on all sides, we too are unsettled, not so much unwillingly as willingly, not wishing through laziness to abandon anything good that might come from perseverance, since we lose nothing by wintering at home and awaiting the outcome of events. For now, we intend, God willing, to choose the voyage to Italy at the very beginning of spring, either to remain there or to return, depending on how our departure from here is arranged. I could speak more plainly, but I refrain; this will suffice for you.

8.As for the terrible plague, which has ravaged this wretched and unfortunate homeland, it continues to destroy, as many can report, and you are certainly aware of it. It has also afflicted our household, cruelly taking two of my sister's children, the best of her four sons, and we have given thanks, knowing the wrath of God to be just, though we fear for those more necessary to us, and especially for ourselves, for the calamity spares no age. We pray to God, but if something worse should happen, we will bear it with gratitude. As for our other misfortunes, under which I risk losing all sense of myself, how could I recount them? To be delivered from all these would require the work of God and the prayers of friends.

TO THEODORE

VI. To the Despot Theodore (1436?).

† To the Despot Lord Theodore.

1.The great commander, that most excellent man, whose distinguishing mark is his loyalty to the one who sent him, has arrived and delivered to us the letters of Your Majesty. To these, we have rendered all that is due to the sender: we have bowed, we have kissed his hands and feet as if they were those of the sender himself, and we have not ceased to do so, just as we would not cease to behold him. We consider ourselves the most fortunate of all men to be deemed worthy of such letters, as once we were deemed worthy of his gifts and commands. Only one thing we did not add: that we did not leave everything behind and immediately come to the source of these letters, from which to draw is the same as to partake of ambrosia. But this, though it may be said, seemed difficult even to us who desired it. Let it be granted, however, to time, fortune, and the other obstacles here. For now, we have been refreshed by your letters, and a double spring has come to us after a double winter. For here, everything is winter to us: it is not easy to leave, nor can we bear to stay. But your letters came, a spring within a spring, and they have relieved our winter, if not entirely, by reminding us of past blessings and giving us hope for future ones. Moreover, they showed that the despot is in good health, a matter of the utmost desire for us, and that we have long awaited a benefactor from land and sea. If one were to consider the whole of these letters, one would marvel at the charms by which even a stone might be moved. For the love, the care for one's own, the letters that are sent and will always be sent, and those that arrive and are received with pleasure—what sorrow would they not drive away, what joy would they not bring? Or rather, whose joy would they not increase, if not that of your soul, which, if nothing else, is marked by its goodwill toward all? What could we give in return for such things? Goodwill, loyalty? Indeed, these are owed to you even if we remain silent. But letters? And who, loving you so much as to be willing to offer even his soul, would spare his letters? Or prayers? Indeed, these too are owed to you from many quarters: as a lord, as the best of men, as a common good to all Christians, as the glory of our race. So, if nothing else, these at least would persuade us to pray to God for your good. But praises? These too would come to you no more from those who love you than from those who do not wish to deny the truth, for these are a common gift to you from all. Yet, even if we cannot repay your kindnesses worthily with anything we have, we will not fall short in the customary and possible offerings: goodwill, praises, letters, and prayers. And you, most divine of lords, who always give to us, perhaps one day you will also grant us the favor of using us and completely dispelling our winter, if nothing better is possible. May God reveal His will concerning us.

TO THE SAME

VII. To the Same (Before Departing for Italy).

† To the Same.

1.Much gratitude to you, most divine of lords, for responding to our letters, even if not entirely as we had hoped. For not granting everything we asked can be attributed to external factors: either the scarcity of resources there, or your brother's demands, or our own uselessness, which should have restrained you even if you were willing, or all these things together. For it is likely that all these factors played a role. But to deem us worthy of letters and to wish to gladden us with them, while sparing us the pain of being openly summoned, is truly the work of your soul, which knows how to love all and desires good for all, and which has appeared to me as the source of all good. Though you did not deem it fitting to summon me openly, judging this to be best, you did summon me by giving reasons and excuses for not summoning me, not only showing your love but also assuring me that, once the obstacles were removed, you would summon me and demonstrate the kindness of the summoner, even if you did not explicitly say so. I willingly pass over what was clearer to me about your summons, so that I might understand your true intentions. But for me, both the summons and the reception, and the honor of being deemed worthy of such things, provided no less pleasure than the writing itself. For if I were to take something pleasing from the letters, what could be more delightful than to find that the lord is good and loving, and to have firmer hopes for the future? Who could be a more reliable guarantor of those marvelous letters than you? Therefore, much gratitude to you, most divine lord, for what you have given us to possess and to hope for, or rather, gratitude to God who moves you toward these things and who reveals you to those who test you as they themselves would wish, though our own affairs are entirely worse, so that no one would strive for any good on our behalf. And your divine soul would not have been moved to goodwill by any of these things, had it not been inclined to seek the source of such motivation. May you always remain thus, or rather, may you always be thus, for there is no way you will not be such, or even better, if I may say so.

2.As for us, the decision to sail has not been made, though it might have been if we had stayed and tried for better fortune. For why should we labor to change lands when we can be happy at home? While the decision remains unchanged, and while the ruler does not deem it fitting to honor us, and we deem it unworthy to remain and do not accept his judgment concerning us, the outcome of the journey will be determined by God. But our eagerness for the desired one will remain, under whom we would gladly appear and endure all that our hopes entail, if we can be strong in anything at all, not now for the first time, but having learned long ago.

TO BESSARION

VIII. To the Priest Bessarion (Early 1436?).

† To the Priest Lord Bessarion.

1.The ambassadors from the Peloponnese, having accomplished their mission, should have come to us late, making their business here a secondary matter. But the friend returning from Rome seemed in a hurry, having no reason to stay. Thus, he came long before them and brought your letters, whether by providence or some other means, some arriving and others delayed. And he was among those who would receive, not those who had already received, though I longed for them much more than the others and thought it just to receive them. If the man had given what he held and then spoken of the rest, perhaps blaming fortune or placing me last everywhere, I would not have thought myself wronged by you. But since he knew nothing more, I was vexed, sitting idle and powerless, dishonored by a man whom no one would accuse of betraying justice and choosing silence when he should speak. This vexation, though late, was nevertheless dispelled by the elder, who, like a gift from home, delivered your letter, from which we derived a double benefit. For from it, we learned other things and somehow soothed our longing, leaning on it as if it were an image of your soul. It also cleared the friend of the charges, though I grieved as if I myself were being accused, even though I was both judge and accused. I granted something more to the accused, yielding to friendship, which must sometimes endure even when it causes loss. Yet I could not fully clear the friend of the charges. For from every perspective, it seemed to me, having been involved in all the affairs there, that he no longer had any regard for our matters, or rather, that it was not even permissible to turn to them and consider our concerns and the multitude of affairs. For the letters to others, which were written in leisure, were of this nature. Thus, the letter has cleared these charges and filled us with great joy, as if we had received the sender himself.

2.You, then, have done well to repay the friend's debt. But we did not think it right to wait for your letters to be moved. As soon as someone first mentioned that letters were being sent by the emperor to the despots in the Peloponnese, we immediately fulfilled our duty, for we only needed an opportunity. Embracing the messenger, we entrusted him with letters to our dearest ones. Then the news of the ambassadors detained him, and our letters returned to us. These are now sent to you with the present ones, lest we seem to be scheming by anticipating, as if we thought it terrible to be surpassed by friends, so that you could not say that you began the correspondence, and we would resent giving before receiving.

3.But if I must respond to your letters point by point, it grieved us to hear of the dangers of the voyage, so that we felt we ourselves had endured them, but it gladdened us to hear of all that followed, so that we felt we ourselves had been saved and escaped all those dangers, and now are in better circumstances where you are, sharing in the joys and sorrows of a friend. And in seeking letters from us, you do well. For though some might say it is superfluous to stir up such matters when one is already resolved, we do not doubt you, but see it as a pledge of your goodwill and a guarantee of the proper flow of letters. For what pleases you to receive, you will surely consider it wrong to withhold. Only one thing in this did not seem fitting: that you asked us not to measure ourselves against you and your peers, when by nature, training, and experience we are not equal to you. How could this not clearly reverse the order of things, giving Nestor the role of Thersites and Irus the treasures of Croesus? Of such arguments, you yourself are aware, and so is anyone else, unless you

mean to surpass us, as if one who simply reaches the end of the race and leaves the athletes behind with their crowns, or as if one who walks around a full table and sits down as if he has enjoyed it, while the others recline and each receives a portion of the table and is content with one part for his pleasure. Moreover, it is not possible for the same leisure to belong to one who is entirely free and to one who has little and needs less, a man bound to the palace and its amusements, seeking some small provision, insufficient in both quantity and quality for his needs, serving father, mother, and other relatives, not to mention the illnesses that, as if allotted to us, make everything hostile and even the sweetest words bitter. But if it was the act of one who loves you, not wishing to deceive or weaken you with praises or delight in some habit that one might reasonably avoid, we, thinking the truth, will not hesitate to say that our affairs are but shadows of the affairs of others, and we are far from doing what is the work of leisure and wisdom. Hence, what we write and will write, except to show our friend, contains nothing solemn. But you, writing and persuading us that you remember our past association, first gladden us with this, and then with the charm of your letters, you will delight us, or the music that has passed over us, and you will strive and show the hero and publish the art.

4.I would also speak to you about the so-called council, about which you long to hear. But you know the past better yourself. Why, then, should I teach you what is already known? Of the present, we know as much as the baggage carriers there know of the future. Why, then, should I labor to entertain you with the obvious? As for the future, those to whom it is permitted dream of it, and He who does and changes all things knows it. But the friend greets you sincerely, and avoiding the noise of the crowd, not yet daring to speak, he takes refuge in silence, and being a friend to both, he thinks that what comes from one will suffice for both. And what they take from you, having once undertaken, they will immediately consider as if they had already thought of it and given what was due.

TO DEMETRIOS MAKRENOS

IX. To Demetrios Makrenos.

† To Demetrios Makrenos.

1.If we were not accustomed to you holding us in high regard and honoring all that is ours beyond our worth, we would not only owe you gratitude for the gift but would already have felt pain as if openly insulted. For how could you not seem to dishonor us and consider us among the base and uneducated if you thought that none of the good things in your possession would win our friendship, and you tried to buy our favor with gifts? But now that you have once shown your love, you have freed us from these suspicions, and whatever you deem worthy must seem pleasant and friendly to us. For it is not fitting that you should wrong your friend either willingly—for you surely love—or unwillingly, for you are wise and nothing escapes you that is fitting. Indeed, you were led to this by your great love, for nothing else can be thought of more than this, and we, considering this, did not wish to contradict. For if one were to remove the friendship for which one must desire and think these things, not even if you offered the gold of Olympus would we think it right to add anything more. For what good could come to us from there that would outweigh the blame of receiving from a source we should not have accepted? One must always receive from those who owe or love, unless one is utterly base and worse than money, acting only for gain. But if you had offered the gift and then made us masters of the decision and allowed us to do as we wished, it would not have been difficult to ensure that all was done fittingly by both, and that we might be grateful to each other: you for receiving and obeying so gladly, and I for granting this second and greater favor of not deeming it unworthy to receive again what was given, since the friend deemed it fitting. For in addition to the other reasons that made the apology solemn, there was also the fact that such things should not come to the natives from foreigners, who should rather be deemed worthy of hospitality and favors from them. But since you applied necessity with gestures and words, and seemed likely to bear it harshly and be angry if we did not enter the house with the gift, we blushed but nevertheless accepted it. For it was not right to leave the suspicion that we did not wish to yield to you in all things or to care how the friend's judgment might be fulfilled.

2.The gift itself is pleasant and very charming in both its craftsmanship and material, but it surpasses all pleasure if one considers the giver and the spirit in which it was given, so that even if we used many similar things, this alone would suffice for all, and we would owe more gratitude to the giver for it than for all the offerings at Delphi, if someone were to bring and give them. But to us, not even all the gold in the world would seem equal to your ways, for by these you have completely captivated us, moved as if by a spell, and we will feel this even more if you, as one who truly loves us, hide nothing of yours from us, for what we divine about you is surely great and consistent with what has already been revealed. For by the joy you brought at once, you showed how much you will give to please, when the time permits. So that even if no one had persuaded us of your intentions before seeing you, and many indeed did so, you yourself, once seen and heard, would suffice as a proof of the good things still at home. Therefore, you need no preparation for the friend, nor any bonds, whatever you might call them, for those once captivated, who will not forsake your things or cease to love you, whatever happens. For we need much more and still need these things, for there is nothing to hold the friend, and we fear that, having hoped for many great things concerning us and things fitting to your nature and intentions, you might suddenly find, as the proverb says, coals instead of treasures,

and grieve as if disappointed in your hopes, and having striven greatly to gain, you might hasten even more to leave as least profitable to you. For truly, our affairs are of this nature, and they seem to be something, though they are nothing at all. But what shall we do? We have prayed most gladly to please you and all others and to be worthy of the hopes placed in us by those who always test us. But since we are formed for dishonor, as others are formed for honor, let this be ascribed to the wisdom of Him who does all things, and certainly to our own intentions, which the Maker could not ignore. We strive, if it is possible, to suffice for all our friends, but we have nothing more than our striving. If anyone thinks it terrible that we can do nothing, let him know that we grieve more for it. But if, despite our forewarning of poverty—not only of words but of every good thing fitting to a man—someone takes the truth for irony, and then, when he expects to receive something, comes away with empty hands, he would be just to blame himself, not those who forewarned him.

TO THE HIEROMONK MAKARIOS

X. To the Hieromonk Makarios.

† To the Most Honorable Hieromonk Lord Makarios.

1.You, dwelling on the renowned islands, travel back and forth from one to the other, delighting in the charms there, no longer mindful of the affairs of the city or attentive to the concerns at home. The land offers you peace and quiet, free from the tumult here, while the sea brings you fish, both beautiful and fat—what need is there to speak of their abundance? The air greets you with its purity and freedom from sorrow, and everything conspires to bring you undiluted pleasure and joy. For it is not possible to grieve a man who, having spurned a wondrous and great city, has chosen to dwell on small islands, where he may breathe freely from urban clamor and philosophize at leisure. You are also free to commune with God at your leisure and to be inspired by the mysteries from above, and to converse with those present, mixing earnestness with playfulness and serious matters with lightheartedness. After eating the fish, you may retire to sleep—not a deep or dreamless sleep, but one sweeter than the deepest, and then rise again, saying, "Enough," when some noise outside the door or some pressing concern awakens you. Perhaps in the evening, when the heat of the day has passed and the star dips toward the horizon, you gaze from the shore at the continents and see the ships laden with cargo, sailing toward or away from us with full sails. Then, bending over the fishing net, you examine the catch to see if it will provide a better dinner than the best you have had. And descending a little, you see here a writhing grouper and a red mullet, and there a scorpionfish gently moving its sting and a dragonfish puffing fiercely and leaping, and you do not leave until you see the fish spilling out of the net. These islands I have long admired, but now I consider them the Isles of the Blessed because of your presence, and if they had any awareness—or rather, if it were possible for my voice to reach them—I would greet them thus and adorn them with words far better and truer than those of the poet who praised his own.

2.And so you philosophize in this way, gradually restoring your body, preserved by illness, to the use of your mind, remaining one, as I think, though you find it hard to bear that you do not have us with you to share in your sojourn there, and this, as you know, we have long desired and counted among our chief aspirations. But fate, our constant companion, has deprived us of this ease and left us behind in pursuit of what we desire. The long-expected illness, striking with great force, has brought us all manner of troubles. We have lain for up to eight days, tasting nothing but water, and not even cold water. It was necessary to bleed us for the diet, and we obeyed, and to cleanse our organs, and we complied, and today, barely able to use a horse, we went to the monastery to inquire about you. Finding all the monks in good health and Arsenios having arrived a little before me, we asked about my dear head, and learning that you are well, we rejoiced as you can imagine and gave thanks to God.

3.This is our state of affairs. If I had completely recovered from the illness, I would have come to you with Arsenios. But since the journey involves some hardship along with the pleasure, and my body, barely recovered and not moving at all, will flee the illness, which is still at the door and threatens to return soon, I have decided to remain at rest, lest I cause myself trouble and sorrow instead of pleasure, being stirred by the journey and recalling the illness again. So we sit in the country, and our birds respond to your fish, though perhaps our fish are so much better than yours because they are bought, not spontaneous like yours. For just as the removal of what troubles us has driven away the illness, so must health return with the addition of

what is lacking. Therefore, do not grieve, most divine of men, but let it concern you to return to us, and after sufficiently indulging yourself, give yourself again to caring for us. There is also a care that is better than idleness. You know well how many lie dead, though you are absent, no less than a body deserted by its soul.

TO THE EMPEROR

XI. To the Emperor John.

† To the Emperor.

1.If we were farmers, O Emperor, and then sat by the harbors, watching for the west wind to blow, and the north wind, and where it would be favorable for those setting sail or returning, should we not become victims of famine, with all the produce of the earth failing us? If the contest called us to display the skills of a sophist or a boxer, and we played the flute in the shade, who would deem us worthy of a crown? Yet the crown and the gifts of the earth would be of little value, even to one who slept, if he were allowed to enjoy them. Therefore, you sit and observe those who approach, testing each to see if he preserves his goodwill toward you untainted. To the more eager and those who care more than others to appear before the emperor and be deemed worthy of a seat, you grant both deeds and words sweeter than these, while to those who have met you once or not at all, you sometimes forgive, sometimes only condemn, and sometimes exact penalties for their ignorance, treating those who appear and those who do not appear the same. But we sit thus, sometimes acting toward neighboring cities, thinking it good to dwell in them; sometimes marveling at the great ships, and how fine it would be to sail away on them; sometimes at the house, thinking it a fine place to grow old and pay the penalty for our folly within it; and sometimes envying the solitary life, for since we are settled nowhere, we are compelled to wander everywhere and let our minds drift aimlessly, having no fixed way of life. Therefore, we who are farmers seek the things of sailors when we should be gathering, or, desiring to be crowned, we condemn the stadium. But it is possible, O Emperor, to err unwillingly, or rather, to suffer misfortune. For circumstances can tyrannize the minds of men, as indeed ours have. We are distressed because we are kept from being with the emperor and performing what services we can. Yet circumstances are an iron wall, and to these must be attributed most human affairs—whether to the emperor, or to those immediately after him, or to the fortune that everywhere opposes me, or to the common storm and tempest in which the affairs of the Romans have come to be, perhaps the fourth, which the emperor and some others might call the displeasure of my mind in all things, through which I cannot even rejoice in the sweetest of all things.

TO THE DEACON JOHN

XII. To the Deacon John Eugenikos, Brother of Mark.

† To the Deacon Lord John Eugenikos.

1.Now, as when I once saw a narcissus, so now for the first time the grace of your letters appeared to me; for before, you deemed it right to delight all others with the beauties of your tongue, but you never allowed yourself to stir the music for us. You, then, since you thought to yoke the flowers to your letters, so that you might please not only the ear and eye but also impart some fragrance, chose the most charming flowers, to which you thought something more was added for pleasure, both because of the season, which least favors flowers, and the virtue no less of those who gathered and sent them to you. But if you had known that they would appear to us for the first time now, you would have sent them all the more. For us, if the plant had not been sent immediately with the letters, it would certainly have delighted us and others who had never seen it before. But now, captivated by your letters, the narcissus seemed to have nothing more. For who, knowing how to be surpassed by the beauty of words, would leave those, full of Hermes and the Muses, to attend to flowers, which, even if they have some solemnity, vanish before they can be fully seen? We were so far from admiring them as something useful that they even seemed to trouble us by demanding some share of our pleasure, compelled by you and your persuasion. This, if nothing else, we admire in your wisdom: that while persuading, you did not persuade, and while not persuading, you seemed to do so. For weaving together the myth of the flower and what physicians say to children about its fragrance and all the rest, which one might say to persuade, you most delightfully presented it, so that you at once stirred the mind to the charm of the flowers and again drew it away from the pleasure of the plant, offering the whole to the letters, for which reason you might see us divided in mind and experiencing a riddle, and, with two things before us, flowers and letters, attending to each in turn, persuaded by the same things and yet not allowed to agree. Thus you led and carried us, devising this clever device, and now for the first time sharing letters, you thought it necessary to play a little, as if unaware that we would write to you all the more for this, and choose all means, if, able to charm so much and play while being earnest, you had kept silent and restrained the music for so long, and endured to hide Orpheus.

2.But the discourse, for which the letters seemed to plead, would now return to you, to the father himself, apologizing for returning so quickly to that wondrous irony, if some better reasoning did not prevent us. For how could it not be outright irony to send us letters as if we would add something to the discourse from ourselves and be able to move something not well placed, we who, if we produce anything equal, would count it the greatest achievement? For if there is one who has escaped your nature and art, yet there was one close to you and many others who could compete with you in these things. If, then, we had obeyed your letters and either restrained the discourse as you deemed fitting or not restrained it, we would have sent it to you immediately, knowing that we could please you with nothing of the sort you seemed to seek. But now the discourse remains with us, having seemed better thus, and enjoys admiration and applause, for which it surely came; for those whom the grace of the letters astonished, even if they were not composed with great care, what must they feel, encountering such great contests? But what you justly demanded of us on its behalf, you will demand nothing of us when you receive the discourse.

3.Therefore, may you always produce such things and delight your friends, as you are best in both mind and art. For to us, something worthy of great effort appearing in such a scarcity of good things is like the beauty of spring flowers, most delightful to all eyes appearing in the midst of winter. But to you, who are always occupied with your own affairs and desire all good things for yourself, it happens much more than usual to rejoice when we perceive the friend excelling. May you be thus in discourse and taste better fortune; or rather, may fortune adorn you with the best of what it has, but the common misfortune deprives you of the pleasure of what is present. Therefore, we must pray for this. For if this obtains a good hand and mind, you yourself will fare better, and so will everyone. God will care for all your affairs above all; but these small and few things, though the multitude of cares is immense, concern both friends equally, lest I fail in anything concerning the friend by indulging myself, though the strength to act is not entirely equal, but one, in addition to willing, also does as much as anyone might say; we, though willing, cannot do as much, but we join in the struggle with prayers. For now, all will be well, God and you willing, and nothing will oppose our purpose.

TO THE DESPOT CONSTANTINE

XIII. To the Despot Constantine.

† To the Despot Lord Constantine.

1.What verdict will someone deliver about me, looking at your definitions? Will he consider me fortunate, thus honored by your letters, or rather unfortunate and brought to the extremity of evils, separated from such a wondrous and provident despot by wicked fortune? Clearly, everyone will deliver the second verdict about me, since I myself hold this opinion about myself. For all the time before, you did not cease to honor me, and you showed many others that you remembered and cared for us, and deemed us worthy of goodwill even in absence, as you were about to bestow it in presence. And I rejoiced, thus preserving your pure intention toward me, which secured the hopes I had for the future, but I grieved that, having been so long separated from the good things I had in hand, I had betrayed them—not out of laziness, but driven by circumstance and some unsound counsel—and I had no way to heal the evil and escape misfortune. For circumstances are an iron wall, and to these must be attributed most human affairs. And so I, deprived of my despot by these circumstances, often desired to regain him, but was again prevented by them, as new obstacles arose. But when I received your latest letters, and these came, I first bowed before them and placed them on my head, and could no longer contain myself, but, caught between inexpressible joy and sorrow, I nearly suffered something and came close to losing my mind. Thus you charmed me with your benefactions, and thus a bitter arrow pierced my soul when I considered the extremity of the honors and the intention from which they proceeded. For I reflected how great your joy would be about me, being with you all the time and performing the services I could, you who care so greatly for me even in absence and deem my affairs worthy of such effort. But to praise me, because I have enjoyed small things and know that I owe you great gratitude and consider this a virtue of my mind, through which I have determined to be grateful for lesser things as for greater—this is worthy of your magnanimity, who, when you give great things, think you give nothing, considering these things far less than your intention and preparation, but it is in no way fitting for me, so that I would be ashamed to say anything about it. Has the wondrous despot deemed me worthy of small things? And how, when he has left nothing undone of the honor and care that the time allowed, who has shared with me what is due to the elderly, caring less for the shortcomings of age, since he knew that I loved him and cared for his honor and glory? For this I would not be ashamed to boast. I would pray that all men might thus believe and trust me and think the same about me.

2.But lest I use many words about what is most evident, God knows that my conscience never suggests that I have been treated less than my worth during that time. On the contrary, I am fully convinced and try to convince all others that you have loved and honored me beyond my worth, and now, if any good is in me, I attribute it to your providence and effort. For they say that the beginning is half of the whole, but you not only opened the door of life to me but also allowed me to advance, and my affairs would be much better if it were up to you. Therefore, measuring your benefactions toward me by the generous intention of your soul, declare about them what you will, and consider the great things small; for it is possible, and I would agree, that the weight of the times is entirely less than the zeal you have for good things. But know that I consider all your benefactions beyond measure and remember them as the greatest, and I have no way to repay them

worthily, much less to contribute to them in deeds; for I would not be so mad as to think otherwise about these things.

3.You, then, most divine of despots, have deemed it necessary to add this greatest gratitude to the greatest benefactions, doing this and taking no satiety in giving; and you seem to reproach us for forgetfulness, as if, though such things have been done for us and greater things are hoped for, we are not yet moved toward the one who has given those and will add these, if he so desires. But you will not reproach us as time goes on; for we are considering with all means how to do what is just and what will benefit us above all. For the letters came at just the right time and found us considering such things; only one thing remains, that the friend should come, for whom we pray that his arrival to us may be easy and for this reason more so, because he will appear to us as a ferryman of your commands; though even without these we longed for the man, and to see him would be worth much to us. He, being most faithful to the sender, loves me greatly because I am so loved and honored, and desiring good things, having from you also the power to act, when he returns, God willing, he will bring you a gift, and perhaps not an unwelcome one. But let these things remain unsaid, lest some evil spirit envy and again raise up circumstances for us, which the grace of God will resolve when they appear, and the power of your virtue and mind; but it is better that these not arise at all. Know that I seek two things from God: ease in the future life, so that none of my failings may stand in the way and lead me away from that happiness, and in this life, the sight of you, revered and longed for by me, with every obstacle removed, which, when I am deemed worthy to behold, I will immediately believe that I have obtained the rest of my requests.

TO THE PRIEST BESSARION

XIV. To the Priest Bessarion.

† To the Priest Lord Bessarion.

1.Your letter reached me while I was in a state of uncertainty, pondering thoughts about you—wondering if anyone could say something timely and beyond what is already known, while also examining your silence toward me. I feared that perhaps something unintended was the cause of this. Yet, your letter brought me double joy. For you yourself became my teacher in matters I had been compelled to seek from others, confirming that you are well and safe, which is a common good. Through your wondrous instructions, you have improved my soul, courageously dispelling present sorrow and barring the entry of future grief. By exposing the nature of human passions—which most trouble those deceived by them—you have waged a brilliant battle against them. I will refrain from speaking of the eloquence and grace of your words, which have so captivated my mind that, even if I wished to praise them, I could not do so adequately. Instead, I am left to marvel and honor them, yet hold them in reverence as something sacred and beyond all praise.

2.As for myself, I had previously lamented fortune for filling my life with much displeasure, and I felt regret for those letters I wrote to you, fearing I had caused pain to a friend when I ought to have removed all sorrow entirely. For I knew that no one's life is free from grief. But now I praise both fortune and the dramatic tone of those letters, for through them you were moved to seek solace in words, rejecting all other remedies and turning to the healing power of art—a remedy you could not surpass, nor would the sufferer seek any other, for though his soul was in pain, he loved words. I place no one on equal footing with your skill and friendship. Thus, if it were possible to simultaneously demonstrate conviction and feign a need for persuasion and artistry, I would now employ even more dramatic language, so that you might display your strength more fully, and I might gain a better understanding of these matters. Yet, even if I were to add to what was written then, no one who knows the truth would accuse me of falsehood.

3.I give thanks to God for your health and to you for your friendship—or rather, I give thanks to God even for this friendship. In return, I offer you this small letter in exchange for your small yet noble one, for I could not do more even if I wished. I received your letter at a time when it would have been profitable to limit my words to a mere greeting, for there was a risk that, by concerning myself with length and composition, the letter might be left without a carrier. Perhaps it is better to send something brief and entirely humble. You would reasonably accept this excuse, for the letter was delayed by circumstances I could not control. It seemed long ago that I could have sent it, yet I willingly withheld it, though I thirsted for such a noble opportunity. Indeed, even your letters, great in both power and length, required that mine, though inferior in all other respects, be measured in brevity, as moderation itself might serve as a substitute for all other virtues.

4.The friend who delivered your letter to me came hoping to find gentler treatment from his pursuers, for he was aware of greater penalties falsely charged against him. Yet, his accusers added this to their charges: that he expected to receive some good from those who had not learned to give. He came seeking forgiveness from those whose lives are far removed from mercy, but he left having accomplished nothing more. Now Chios holds this man, who prefers the honors there, despite their difficulties, over the dishonor among us, which he ought to have endured by remaining. Though he approached us, as was his custom, and many

others more capable than we are, he found ample proof of our eagerness to help him but blamed us, as much as those who could not help, for being unable to do more.

TO HIS HOLINESS POPE EUGENE IV

XV. To Pope Eugene IV (Before the Council of Florence).

† To Pope Eugene IV.

This too is a true demonstration of your love for humanity and your paternal care, through which you preserve the image and likeness of God among men. For you not only received my written appeal and deemed it worthy of consideration, but you also chose to honor and benefit me with a reciprocal letter, which I hold in reverence and bow before in every way. This is the mark of the best of fathers, the imitation of God, and the sign of a noble soul that does not consider the lowliness of those it benefits when it is right to do so. But I, having been moved even earlier by the truth itself and by circumstances, felt it right to dedicate myself to you as a common father and shepherd of the world, to pray for the apostolic vision, and to desire to be counted among your flock. Now I hold this conviction even more strongly, and I am a more ardent lover of those distant goods, which are beyond compare. Above all else, I long to see and venerate the seat of Peter and you, his successor and emulator, who from this source, like a rising sun, illuminate the entire world.

I pray and desire these things not for the sake of temporal gains or what most men seek, but to sanctify both body and soul by merely seeing and venerating your apostolic feet. I also seek to accomplish what will greatly contribute to the honor of the Church, your glory, and your renown, as well as to the purpose you hold for the common good of the world. I rejoice for my homeland, knowing that through my efforts to stir the common father to its care, I will move him toward all that is good—a task for which I have long been prepared, needing only the right moment. But it is the work of God and your prayer and providence to bring this desire of mine to fulfillment. Even while I remain here, clinging to my homeland, I bring to your blessedness the offerings of a loyal servant and proclaim your virtues, for I have nothing truer or more fitting to do. I plant in all souls a longing for you and pray for the tranquility of your affairs, knowing this to be a common good and the cause of many blessings for mankind.

All men find in your deeds a common subject for discourse, and all praise, marvel, and give thanks. But this brother, Lodizius of Tarbiz, makes the praises of your blessedness his very nourishment and seems to blame nature for not giving him many tongues and a voice like a trumpet or the speed of birds, so that he might use them to proclaim the praises of the truth. Finding in me a kindled desire for your blessedness, he has inflamed it further and through his words and deeds has endeared himself to many others. He came then to your blessedness seeking justice and returned with even greater joy, having gained above all else the vision of the apostolic throne and becoming an eyewitness to what is sung in your praises. Now, though wronged beyond all justice and reason, he runs again to the common father and the judgment of the judge. To him, a loyal and good servant of your blessedness who seeks what is just and is wronged with the knowledge of all, you will remove this burden and make him return with hopes greater than before, so that he may cease to accuse those who have wronged him and instead give thanks for this second journey to the common father and the benefits received from it. For my part, I intercede on his behalf and commend first myself and then him to your blessedness.

TO PHILELPHUS

XVI. To Philelphus, in Milan (1437).

† To Philelphus in Milan.

1.The emperor, as is his custom, listened to your letter with favor and added to his praise what was fitting for him to say and for you to hear. He believed you were present through me and that you heard through my ears what he declared, having been convinced of our friendship by many previous proofs. It is unnecessary to recount everything, but it suffices for you to learn from a friend of the emperor's goodwill, which you already knew from afar, and how far he was from finding your letter burdensome, even though he is now preoccupied with concerns that might cause him to neglect even those he loves most.

2.For the one who most often troubles him among his brothers was not content merely to shake fears and snatch away something from the whole, always adding by force to his own, but now he has openly raised a common enemy against both his brother and his entire family. He has secretly toasted the freedom of his lineage, and while he desires kingship, he secures it for his accomplice. But we hope that the guardian of justice will stand with us and the emperor, and that he will exact penalties from them—one for his folly, the other for his treachery. You too would assist with your prayers in this matter.

3.I love Philelphus even without writing, and I would wish that the frequency of my letters not burden the carriers, for there is no one to whom I could more justly give the fruits of friendship and art. But amid the disturbances of judging, I am scarcely allowed to breathe, and unwillingly, I wrong my friends. You know that one appointed to such a duty must not even enjoy leisure at home, which brings some pleasure and delight, for even there, much time is spent considering justice, and there are constant interruptions from those who attend. It is difficult to escape blame without sometimes neglecting food and sleep. For the judge must, in addition to other things, be gentle and temper the severity of his authority with cheerfulness, thus administering justice and, through the charms of words, softening the bitterness of the laws, which those under his examination must necessarily endure. It is a great thing if one can persuade others to accept the penalties of the law with gratitude.

4.For these and many other such reasons, which I pass over in silence as less troubling, you would forgive me for not rendering what is due. Though I have loved Peter for many reasons before, I now add much more to my affection for him because of you. Though I greatly desire to help him, I am prevented. But he, being just, knows how to give thanks for what we can do for him, as if enjoying everything, and in his misfortunes, though he grieves, he least of all blames us for acting against his wishes. You will marvel, I know, at the man, who, without time or the influence of teachers, has become a pure Greek from a barbarian. You would say he has returned full of the discourses of Isocrates.

TO ALEXIS LASCARIS

XVII. To Alexis Lascaris (1438).

† To Alexis Lascaris.

1.Having become indebted to you for many acts of former kindness, I now find myself unable to repay you adequately for the opinion you expressed and the concern you showed for me. For to examine and learn how we were prepared for the voyage, to write your thoughts, to criticize the inopportuneness of the matter, and to restrain our eagerness for the voyage with hopes often given at other times—how could this not be the act of one who loves us sincerely, who places our interests alongside his own, and who is willing to surpass every grace that one might attempt to offer? I have long known you to be a friend, and I have argued against those who claimed I was deceived (and there were many who said this), saying that I had received sufficient proofs of your love and that these were stronger than any suspicion. But now, if ever, I am convinced that you both love and care for our interests. For seeing the master, as it seems, displeased by the rumor of my departure and calling the matter cowardice—that after living so long with hopes in him and enduring staying in my homeland for his sake, I would now, when it is time to obtain what was hoped for, through negligence betray everything—you deemed it right to write and advise me to remain, as the hopes would soon be fulfilled and there was no need to seek better fortune from afar when it could be obtained nearby. For I could not think that you would have expressed that opinion and restrained my desire to depart unless you knew more and had the means to satisfy the friend who, because of you, neglected the good things expected elsewhere. Therefore, I give thanks for both your advice and the goodwill that prompted it, and I add my own thoughts, wherever fortune and judgment may lie.

2.Know, then, that I was prepared with all I had for the voyage, and those who reported this to you were in no way lying, but I was restrained neither by the honor the emperor planned for us (which I will not speak of to those who know) nor by the expected council. For I have so far avoided the council as more fitting for others, and it would rather persuade me to depart than teach me to remain quiet. But I was persuaded most of all by your advice, for I thought you gave the best counsel, and to one resolved to stay, you seemed to promise good fortune not far off, giving me such confidence, drawn from the master's judgment. Perhaps I was also overcome by certain considerations, which tell me that after this winter, my absence will be more illustrious. So I will sit still and again endure the winds of the Bosporus and the snows here, comforting myself with hopes, though the present circumstances, except for books and words, give me cause for displeasure. Yet, with the swallows, I too will appear to those who long for me, whom providence has given to many others in many places, but to you more than others, as I believe and desire. If I must entrust myself to you, contrary to all other expectations, I do not know, but you, with God's help, might arrange it, having prepared the voyage from the beginning and brought it to us.

TO AN UNKNOWN PERSON

XVIII. To an Unknown Person.

† To an Unknown Person.

1.Often intending to write to you since I sent my last discourse on those questions, I was hindered by the emperor's commands, under which I thought you would imitate the speed of birds—so kindly and urgently did he summon you. I should not have learned this from others but should have been the one to receive the imperial decree and gladly included it in my letter, especially since I was the first to suggest and most persuade him to call you. Knowing that the emperor, having used much zeal and often sent every arrow of persuasion toward you—to which a mere nod would suffice—and that you, knowing how to yield to rulers, as one who naturally seeks justice and greatly desires to fulfill the command, are yet tyrannized by the good things here, which, even if small, cannot be found elsewhere, I thought it vain to undertake the labor of writing. For before the bearers of the letter arrived, I expected you to be with us, counting the days as I sat. But you, though many have often come, still appear to be held by Sparta, as if the emperor had commanded you to stay, not to run. This has been the reason for not receiving letters from us as usual. Nor have I received letters from you, though you say you have sent many, and I fully believe you, nor is it the slander of wicked men, stirring up friends against each other with fabrications. For no one has told me anything about you that could trouble my soul, nor am I so simple and ready to believe everything said to me, and our affairs are surely above the malice of slanderers. For I, always praising, loving, and greatly caring for what contributes to your good reputation, am known to no one, so that anyone attempting to shake such firmly rooted goodwill would do so in vain. And you, I think, would never say anything base about us, being good and wise and placing nothing above the truth. For even if we may fault you in other things, you would never blame our discourses, to which you owe many thanks, and you will owe more to God who gives them. But if you wished to say anything of the sort, you would surely restrain yourself, for the facts cry out against it. Therefore, being free from all such suspicion, keep that opinion yourself, and know that we not only keep it but also increase it and act in your interests, as you yourself would desire. If any honor from others is needed, the honor from virtue and words suffices. Obey the emperor who summons you, and obey your teacher, for there is no one for whom you could more justly labor, and besides you, no one will assist the emperor in what he plans to do. For I would wish there were more and better men to bring zeal and labor to the discovery of truth, and if our common misfortune were removed, I do not know whom they would have to use, if not you.

TO THE EMPERORS BROTHER

XIX. To the Emperor's Brother (Around 1437).

† To the Emperor's Brother.

1.You now have, though late, the other part of my promise, and my discourse comes to you, bringing joy as it comes from one who loves you and is sent by you, and it will be honored and will honor the sender. For to receive a discourse from such a master surpasses all honor. If it also appears worthy of its subject and magnitude, this will be better for him than golden crowns. The discourse on the question does not yet arrive, for it is not yet composed, requiring more leisure than I now have. For it must surpass the former in both magnitude and art, lest it seem to have been expected in vain. It will come when I have leisure, persuaded by such confidence. But I think the present discourse will suffice until then, for it contains something toward the solution of the question, attempting to speak about divine conception. Knowing that nothing I produce is worthy of effort, I would never willingly have sent it as fitting for wise ears. But at your command, I gladly offer it, the father of those discourses, knowing that one who never denies his ignorance will owe no penalty for it. What the good Karabas has shown in writing, I have long been persuaded is no less for goodwill and honor, and for these I owe you lifelong thanks and prayers. If God wills, you will add to those you now benefit, who are great, and to us, though small now, surely more than now, and it will be possible to repay the wonderful master with all we have.

TO THE GRAND CHARTOPHYLAX BALSAMON

XX. To the Grand Chartophylax Balsamon.

† To the Grand Chartophylax Balsamon.

1.You, who are the cause of our asking many great things from your honor, giving all readily and refusing nothing out of great love, have now, without any other prompting, helped a woman in weakness and stopped a hand raised unjustly against men, which should have remained quiet and restrained, yielding to God and reason. But we, if ever, need you to punish the rash hand and mind, not only helping the woman but also because we too are wronged with her. For she raised me, and after my mother, she enjoys honor and care from me, and she wrongs no one, nor is she quick to speak a harsh word against anyone, unless someone provokes her with insults from a cart and stirs her while she lies dead. If she seems to wrong those who share the same courtyard, it is just for me, as the master of the courtyard, to judge, not for others to both wrong and exact penalties, seizing my authority. Therefore, if you help her and justice, and restrain a man raging far from his station and age—or rather making both an excuse for disorder—for he knows that apart from your honor, all will refrain from him, even if he does the worst—you will also help me, do what is right, and please me. For I, respecting the dignity of the priesthood, thought it wrong to trouble him even with words and took care of my own honor. The one who dared this is that priest whom I once freed from your just anger at my request. The woman will show the blows and insults she endured, and if you wish to hear, she will explain the causes, which I, having learned from the whole household, found no way to excuse him who so boldly insulted and struck her. If I, having often interceded for him before, now seem to act so that he may enjoy your anger, it is no wonder. For he, who should have been grateful for that pardon, obtained without effort and almost before feeling your anger, has decided to offend me, disregarding all else, though we honor him beyond his station. Therefore, he must be punished, so that he may learn to act more temperately toward me and the neighbors, not to assault honorable women who have done him no wrong, nor to despise those whom it is just to respect and honor. This will greatly benefit him for the rest of his life, for perhaps now, having escaped punishment, he has acted more rashly with hand and tongue, and instead of women, he may encounter men, and instead of those who respect his station, he may meet despisers and bolder men. Therefore, let him now, if ever, enjoy your just anger, and let him obtain pardon again with effort, earnestly entreating you, who can give it, and placing his head at your feet, while I again intercede, not only with a nod, as before, but with many promises and daily supplications. I cannot express the gratitude we owe you, greater than what is owed for all else. Thus, you have deprived us even of the ability to give thanks, having shown many great proofs of goodwill toward us in the past, surpassing all gratitude.

TO AMBROSE

XXI. To Ambrose Traversari (1438).

† To Ambrose.

1.Most honorable father, bodily illnesses, more numerous and severe than usual, have now fallen upon me and turned all my attention to themselves, so that I can scarcely breathe, and they keep me from your sight and company, which I do not know what could be more precious to those who know you, and those who have met you usually depart with great benefit, as I myself, having once met you by chance, immediately felt much improved. I know that you, remembering and loving us greatly, are yet diverted by the cares of public affairs, which have removed you from your beloved leisure, a greater necessity and a more precious desire, and you are hindered from doing much for us that you would most desire, if you were allowed to remain in your place and care only for yourself and your friends. Thus, you might seem to those who do not judge matters well either not to love us or to be naturally forgetful of friends. Therefore, your praiseworthy conduct and ours are not beyond excuse. Hence, we do not cease to love you and to give thanks for your goodwill toward us, and you, do not wish to exact penalties for involuntary faults, and resolve to free us from them, partly with prayers, partly with external help, entreating God for our health and considering how we, even in sickness, can be with you as much as possible.

2.Of these, the second you cannot now do, nor do we need it here, but since the desire for union with the emperor, who loves you greatly, and with us, moves you to your city—or rather, you yourself have imposed the necessity of moving on us by such desire—for others, it suffices to release your city and its delights, spectacles, splendid houses, and other things no less than those at home, but for us, grant some corner of your dwelling, which you hold and adorn as dearest in your beloved city. Thus, you will justly honor those most loved with what is most your own, and then, being able to be with you more easily, we will neither blame our illnesses nor grieve so much at our misfortunes. If then, again, all things take you from us less than now, yet the cares of public affairs deprive us of you, the virtue and wisdom of the monks there will console us for this lack, whom I believe to be most beneficial and pleasant to those near them, being guided by such a father and teacher, so that each of them suffices for those who do not have the father. For I know that you will restore our custom, having long been accustomed to noble men devoted to God, from whom we even reluctantly part at sleep. Hence, it will be fitting for us and our attendants not to trouble the monks, if not for virtue, at least for custom. This we now seek from you as a great favor and demand as a double debt, both because you, as a friend and father, would justly refuse nothing of the sort, and because you promised to give it with pleasure when we left the apostolic court with you after that consecration. A promise once made I hold among debts, as the opinion of one of the wise men you love.

TO MARCO LIPPOMANO

XXII. To Marco Lippomano, in Venice (1439).

† To Marco Lippomano, in Venice. Written from Florence.

1.But I can no longer wonder what has happened to the most excellent E. Lascaris, who is so deeply engrossed with the Venetians, even though he receives many reproaches, many jests, and even more letters urging him to return. For your presence and company, having captivated him, have justly made him forget all else, and it seems that the letter sent about the book was an excuse for him. To stop me from blaming him, though he has done no wrong—for no one is wronged who is conquered by those who conquer all—he, most wisely, contrived the need for Dorotheus, from which I was to understand by what sirens he is held, so far removed from his friends. Yet he himself is not one to be despised, having given proof of himself to some. Thus, your company binds him, and he makes it more pleasant by providing no ignoble opportunities from both his manners and his words, especially those about art, which have captivated many of those among us who pursue the same. For he is truly an Asclepiades, and like one who has studied under him, he possesses much of the master's skill, so that he seems to achieve this not without divine favor.

2.This, then, contributed to his letter about the book. And now I have ceased to blame him, though I would wonder not if he were to return sooner than expected, but if he would ever even consider the journey back to us. Grieving greatly that I neither met you before nor can now be with you, I console myself with my friend's fortune, in a way my own, the worse with the better, and I too enjoy your company in part because of our friendly association.

3.I have long known of your reputation for excellence, and it has penetrated my ears and soul. The desire to imitate good and earnest men, though without zeal or effort, has been sown in me from childhood. But when you were sent to adorn Crete, the greatest of our islands, I rejoiced for those you would rule, thinking only one thing unfortunate: that having tasted your virtue and philosophical guidance, and having experienced what Plato praises, they would no longer be led by such men, but perhaps by good men, though not equally skilled in ruling. Thus, I rejoiced for them and prayed to see the island, if possible, not making your presence a mere footnote in history, but considering it worthy of greater effort because of my desire for the ruler and my esteem for the ruled. But this was not entirely possible for us, occupied as we were with other matters, before we could seize the opportunity and prepare properly, while the law called you back to those who sent you.

4.But when I had to go to Italy to fulfill my promises to the Roman emperor, which I made after being left behind due to illness, intending to sail afterward, I rejoiced from afar and prepared to spend much time with you at leisure. But some fortune compelled me to hasten to the emperor without delay, not even allowing me to linger in golden Venice and taste its charms, among which Lippomano justly holds the first place. Instead, as soon as we disembarked, we sought those to take us to the emperor by river, and now we sit here again, the affairs not allowing us to move elsewhere or seek what we might desire. Know, then, that we greatly honor your deeds, as we did before, knowing them, but now hearing much more and greater things about you from those who have met you and from the rumors that have grown around you, who say they departed not without wonder.

5.Thus disposed toward us, may you also wish to show goodwill and make use of us, and if anything concerning us comes before you, command us most gladly to serve you. For we will owe you a second thanks, both for your gratitude and for honoring us with the honors of friends, when we, surpassing other friends, turn to you with confidence drawn from what you have not disdained to use. For perhaps we will also be with you in due time, God willing, and advancing our goodwill to the form of friendship, we will add nothing less to it and will have much to tell those who inquire about these matters. But if some fortune again takes this from us, nothing will prevent us from testifying and confirming this bond of soul and letters, rejoicing in each other.

TO AN UNKNOWN PERSON

XXIII. To an Unknown Person.

† To an Unknown Person.

1.If you did not love us, we would justly blame you, not because you neglect friends, but because we, who love you, have escaped your notice. But now, do you hope to escape Nemesis by wronging those you love, which we know well? Do you think we consider your music, which you delay in your letters, so slight that it could move even stone hearts? But we would say long before that we do not understand the harmony of the most beautiful words or think your melodies sweeter and more graceful, unless you call it envy, and consider the pleasure of your voice a crowd to our lack of music. But no one will say we are conscious of such a character.

2.Therefore, you wrong us by your silence, and having been convicted by all the votes of the laws of friendship, do you not care to exonerate yourself? Though it is difficult to be acquitted of other charges or to escape the prescribed penalty once one is convicted, your one letter can resolve this. Sending it late, you will stop us from crying out against you and lamenting the injustice to all we meet. We ask only one thing: knowing that by breaking the habit of silence, you will be constant in writing, as you were constant in silence before. But do not blame us for our long silence; for if we wronged you in other ways, by being the first to change, we have resolved the charge. And you yourself would say you judge rightly. What material will you supply for your letters? The kindness of the master, with which I am convinced you are filled. For he is such to all who are with him, and to the educated, he has inherited the foresight of his fathers. Knowing you among the more notable of these, and knowing that your deeds adorn your reputation more, you will hold the appropriate honors. I think the master's good deeds will not only suffice for letters in place of material, but will surpass the need for many words, if there were those who chose to praise the great with zeal, so that he is much more illustrious through these than through his royal blood and most noble station after the first. And if I did not fear envy too much, I would add all that adorns his lineage and entire house with its own beauty. For he has shown plainly that the order of birth is no obstacle to the acquisition of virtue for those who desire it, but one may, when one wishes, rival those who have preceded in time. It suffices to say this.

3.Thus, having woven your letter with these flowers, how do you think you will delight us? For we rejoice in the praises of the man, recounting something ourselves and hearing from others. For what you praise in us, which many report, we owe you the greatest thanks. But beware of enemies, who might say you are deceived by goodwill into favoring us beyond the truth. There, however, no one will blame you for this, for all love you equally. The most excellent and noble Asanes places our good reputation before his own advantage. But other cities nurture fierce beasts, to whom even our living is burdensome, not to mention being praised by the good and wise, and they will sometimes resent your goodwill toward us.

TO LORD MARK OF EPHESUS

XXIV. To Mark of Ephesus (1440).[23]

† To the Lord Mark of Ephesus, to whom he sent a letter from Ephesus when he secretly departed from Constantinople to Ephesus, fearing the hostility of the ruling authorities toward him for not participating in and agreeing with the decrees and decisions of the Council of Florence concerning the procession of the Holy Spirit.

1.The letter of your holiness also reached me, having escaped the hands of many. For the one entrusted with it, either failing to give it to me while avoiding others, or unwilling to guard it—I do not know how, though you gave many instructions—made my affairs the subject of much mockery for many. But while some were filled with desire, learning that your zeal for the faith still burns brightly, others, especially those who are not pleased with your actions, mocked. Then, at last, one of my friends brought it to me, and I, having previously blamed the simplicity of the guardian of the law, as I might call him, who, among other things, deprived me of the pleasure of your handwritten letter, took as much delight as possible from what was given. For I could not doubt that it expressed your mind, especially since many who had read the first part, to whom this had happened, and who could discern your spirit and zeal from afar—not to mention your other qualities—confirmed it. I only blamed you for believing those who fabricate the worst about us, though you had much to oppose to their slanders. I had hoped you would strongly condemn those who speak foolishly out of ignorance and envy, who are known to wage war against what is agreed upon and do not shrink from the refutations of falsehood, with which justice rightly opposes unjust mouths. For it is not fitting for us, who have cared for truth above all, knowing well the gain of truth, to despise it, nor for those who seek truth to err, having many aids from nature and art, and entrusting all to divine hopes. For if one rests firmly on these, it is impossible for him to depart in shame.

2.I think no one is unaware that we have used no teacher of rhetoric, philosophy, or the lofty theology that surpasses the understanding of the many, for the misfortunes of our time long ago took away our ambition for these things, leaving only a shadow of them in some, and even these few. But as much as the sea's edge is visible, though its depths are not, as someone said, having received from others, by the grace from above that rewards our zeal, we have been filled with desire and have advanced far in the sciences. And now, knowing how much we surpass others, yet bearing the rank of disciples, we love and desire to follow all who can lead, and we pray that all may have this ability. We do not claim to be teachers of all, but we seek for ourselves the knowledge of truth from God, fearing much the errors nearby and trembling, believing deliverance from them to be a divine gift. If someone comes to us as a student, after much apology for our

---

[23] A = Laurentian Plut. 74, codex 13, folios 289v-292v, from the 15th century;
P = Parisinus 2135, folios 99-105v, from the 15th century;
I = Iberian Athos 248, folio 2, from the 16th century;
C = Edition by L. Petit in the Patrologia Orientalis, volume XVII, pages 464-470, based on A, P, and I;
B = Second edition by S. Lambros, op. cit., volume II, pages 335-340, based on A and P. See the first edition, based on A alone, ibid., pages 314-319.

Title: To Gennadios I of Ephesus. To [the] Ephesus – diatagmata omitted by P, which has this title: To the most holy metropolitan of Ephesus, venerable and exarch of all Asia, and to me, in the Lord, most divine, most holy father and master, best and wisest of men; Gennadios, while still a layman, title invented entirely. It bears another title in red ink in the upper margin of folio 290, thus conceived: To Mark, lord of Ephesus, the Eugenikos, reciprocal to what he sent to him.

ignorance and advice to others to dare such things, we reluctantly yield to one who insists, lest we be required to account for the growth and interest of some talent perhaps within us. Therefore, it is not right to fear for us, so disposed, lest we have strayed from the right path, any more than it is fitting for anyone to have this fear for himself. For we previously held the sound doctrine and have not ceased to do so, and for the future, we are nourished by good hopes in God, that we will never be abandoned by Him to falsehood and error, nor suffer so terrible a punishment for our sins. But if some, now and before, misjudge our opinion and become perverse interpreters and judges of our words, some out of ignorance, others out of envy, I forgive the passion, though it pains me greatly, and I pray to the Giver of all good to implant knowledge and virtue in the souls of our brothers.

3.I have also thought of a remedy for this, though not noble, yet necessary. For as long as I seem to engage in public life, perhaps out of some philanthropy and a noble and civic spirit, not for glory or wealth, as you were moved to accuse, I will keep silent about other things and hold them within myself, like a private man among private men, observing some law of God and philosophy that does not permit just anyone to discourse on divine and lofty matters or to wish to persuade those who cannot be persuaded, and about whom, as the proverb says, "Even if you persuade, you will not persuade." I will only wish to benefit my fellow citizens as much as I know they can seek, discern, and retain, and as much as they themselves willingly move me to and ask of me. For I can offer myself to them not only as a teacher of philosophy and doctrine but also as a counselor, judge, and ambassador for the greatest matters, and all this with virtue, God willing. For without philosophy, one cannot possess or practice these things well, yet one can benefit a city and nation from them, even if they do not know how to philosophize. But when, by God's kindness and the removal of every obstacle, I wish to leave the things of Caesar to Caesar and yield the burial of the dead to the dead, and to place all my hope in the Lord, to use your words, then I will be entirely free from all trouble, attending to myself and considering the failures of my former life, striving to preserve myself for the future, if I can do anything with God, and I will neither seek to please anyone nor care to be pleased by anyone, nor will I take account of the opinions and rumors of the many or of what you count as reasons. For I do not seek greater honor, precedence, pride, or the title of rabbi by withdrawing outwardly and changing my garments, as if coming from wickedness to an inexcusable insult, nor will I rejoice in seeming to despise the few for greater gains or grieve in yielding to others (for if these things were my concern, there is no sacred chorus that would not have had me as its leader, nor will it have me again if I wish). But I wish either to benefit the common good while suffering little harm myself, or, having once promised not to harm, and having once humbled myself, not to seek pride, for it is difficult for one who has reached high rank and precedence to remember humility, unless one has a most noble soul, which Aristotle calls heroic and divine.

4.By this path, I will arrive at peace with all. This will keep me from quarreling with anyone. This, I hope, will also please God, who makes His name known as peace. Yet, when there is a contest and a stadium, and when the truths are in danger of being silenced, and when someone, by remaining silent, shamefully betrays the crowns of confession and plots against his neighbors, then I will not sit silent, but with unveiled face, full of zeal and joy, I will boldly proclaim the truth, and neither honor nor gifts, nor anything like them, will make me yield, nor will I shrink from threats, nor flee out of love of life, but standing firm and advocating for the true doctrines, I will endure whatever must be suffered. For in such a necessity, both silence and speech will be shameful and the cause of crowns. But as long as there is no such necessity, and we play with divine words

as if in jest, moved by whatever passion each one has, and examine the things of God not according to God, I consider silence the most beautiful thing of all. For this reason, I have often regretted many things said out of season, from which I know I have caused no good to anyone but have been the cause of scandal to not a few, who, taking hold of my words and each interpreting them to their own liking, thought I held a double and varied opinion about divine things and accused my soul of being easily swayed. And I know I owe no account for such a scandal, if it did not arise from what I said wrongly, but from what they wrongly interpreted, and if they did not know how to distinguish economy from exactness and the proper times for each, and for this reason blamed those who know how to distinguish. Wretched are they who proceed thus even against the blameless. For who does not know that many such things were said and done by the common Teacher and Lawgiver and His disciples, in which what is economically managed seems no less exact to one who considers the purpose of the economy, since He came to cast a sword upon the earth, but for the sake of peace, the peace He left to His disciples when He bodily departed from them. For what seemed peace before was surely war, strife, and confusion.

5.I know, then, as I have said, and am convinced that I am in no way the cause of such a scandal, but I would have wished to remain entirely silent, so as not to give even the pretext of a cause to myself. Therefore, do not fear the harmless, nor think that I have much regard for such things henceforth. For I will not try to lead anyone to extremes or to some mean of all things, because I have chosen to remain in quiet and to make no account of such matters unless absolutely necessary, not because I condemn all means, since I know that the divine Gregory placed the true faith between Judaism and Hellenism, that is, between monarchy and polytheism, and said that the opinions of Sabellius and Arius are diametrically opposed evils, like prodigality and stinginess, while the doctrine prevailing among the orthodox is a mean. And one could cite many means praised and honored by the teachers in divine matters. For if there is no mean between truth and falsehood, as you say, though this too is full of many difficulties and questions among all the wise in such matters, yet among the opinions formed about the words of truth, if they are false and opposed, it is just to define the true opinion as a mean and true. Therefore, it is not because I flee the mean, but because of the silence I have adopted, that I do not concur with any mean. But when I see the time to break the law of silence, then I will surely bring forth what I have gathered about divine things with much effort and by the grace of God, even if I seem unpleasant to you or to the pope, and even if I must suffer anything.

TO THE PRINCE IN THE PELOPONNESE

XXV. To the Prince in the Peloponnese (1441).

† To the Prince in the Peloponnese.

1.I do not know to whom I should first give thanks, so as to preserve propriety. For everything in your letter to us was beyond measure, for which one might feel the greatest gratitude. Indeed, it is difficult even to count them, so do they surpass in both number and greatness. It suffices to say that you composed that most beautiful letter with the Graces and Muses, as they say, and for this reason, every good thing was harmoniously woven into it. The art of words served you in part, and nature itself in part, but the greatest service came from the moderation of your spirit. In this, as if in a mirror, I saw the variety of your virtues and greeted your soul, which, along with the letter, bore so many beauties. For in the moderation of your mind, all the best things are immediately present, like a rich man who hides his treasure and uses it at the right time. Others, on the contrary, flaunt empty displays to cover their lack, amusing themselves in vain. But you not only allowed us to infer the rest from your moderation but also...

2.Having delighted us so greatly, you have now made us love you even more. Show how nobly you love us in return, and having immediately kindled the spark of friendship into a flame, you have transferred all the dignity of our former zeal to yourself. For by surpassing so much what came from us with what came from yourself, you surely concealed our beginning. For what came from us might be called an attempt, but what came from you, proceeding from manifest virtue, seems to have accomplished everything, and you no longer allow us, even if we wished, to neglect you, for we are ashamed of the eagerness of a friend, by which we will scarcely be able to keep pace instead of being challenged. Therefore, by presenting yourself so much more brilliantly in your letters than our hopes, though noble, you adorn our lives greatly, for we count all your deeds as our own good. Therefore, we will offer sacrifices to God on your behalf and owe as much gratitude for your salvation as for our own. And if we place the common good above our own, even more so. For if anything of ours can harmonize with the common good, let it be for you and our other friends to consider. But I am doubly bound to the most earnest of my friends as common benefactors. Such is your case too, for we will not be persuaded by you, abandoning the testimony of deeds, nor will we heed you if you belittle your own deeds in the face of the many who rightly honor them.

3.Let this suffice for us. We greatly rejoice with you in the goodwill of the most excellent leaders, from whom we once benefited greatly and now grieve to be deprived. Yet, thinking that we too share in your good fortune by being with them, we console our minds moderately, and then we delight in the rumor of their virtue in place of the former sight. For we also rejoice with them, as you might think, in the praiseworthy peace with your brother, for through it, all better things will come to them from God and men.

TO PAISIOS

XXVI. To Paisios in Crete.

† George Scholarius to Paisios in Crete.

1.Many have reported to us the anger of the rulers among you, which they showed by favoring those who have rebelled against us and by opposing you and others who uphold the ancestral faith. And this news brought us a strange emotion. For the prison and its chains almost held us captive as well, sharing all the bitterness there, so did friendship transfer the sensation of pain from your body to our flesh, not hindered even by the intervening seas. But as I considered the cause of these misfortunes, I began to rejoice as if at a festival and to leap for joy. For that imprisonment did not hold my Paisios as a criminal or a wicked man, but rather those who inflicted those punishments on you, though you had done no wrong, were such. And it seemed to me, sitting with you, that I heard you constantly praying for the change of those who wronged you, while Paul spoke of his chains and made the pains for the truth and the honor of suffering for Christ, like him, a cause for joy.

2.Knowing that your thoughts were full of such philosophy in those troubles, I rightly shared in your cheerfulness in adversity, and, to tell the truth, I blessed that prison, which received such a treasure, and I envied your good fortune. And if it were possible, I would have prayed that some wicked men among us might honor us with the same afflictions. For what could be more pleasing to a pious soul than labors for the truth? What life could be happier than one spent in such struggles?

3.While we were considering these things amid those gloomy rumors, other messengers arrived, assuring us that you had been freed from all and were enjoying your former ease, along with those who had shared your bonds. They recounted to us in detail the time of your imprisonment, the day of your release, and everything in between. In all this, the passion of our Lord came to mind, and I found my Paisios to be a true sharer in what He endured. And I took the order of those days as a sign of the gifts laid up for you and of your godly endurance of those trials. For I did not think that all those things had simply coincided with your temptations for Christ. For He went into the wilderness to be tempted, and you were held in the afflictions of the prison on the same days. Thus, you suffered doubly with His passion and were conformed to Him in two ways: first, in the common way of all of us who truly serve Christ, by which we restrain our souls when the time of that transcendent tragedy comes, and we are driven by the pains of our Lord for us; and second, because you also suffered bodily and, by the order of the days, brought the purification of the flesh. Therefore, I also glorified you in due season. For the same day was a feast for you both of the Lord's resurrection and of your deliverance from your own troubles. And now, placed among the assemblies of the confessors, you adorn not so much the island you inhabit as all your friends, even those so far from you. But live, and increasing your zeal for the truth both for yourself and for those near you, delight us likewise with news of good things. For even if you were to give up everything to unjust demands, it would not be right for you to abandon this most pious fellowship.

TO ASANES

XXVII. To Asanes in Lemnos (1449–1450).

† George Scholarius to Asanes in Lemnos.

1.Those who bring the fortunate trireme will report the disturbances among us—for it is better to say this than to say whom it brings. But what will be the end of them? He who sees all things knows, but I, considering the impending hunt—I mean the barbarian, who even strives to surpass Xerxes' army in the number of troops he now gathers—fear the confusion at home, lest they call him against us. For our condition is inherently weak and easily overwhelmed, unless God restrains the barbarian's force. But if things go badly at home and they find us divided among ourselves, what should we expect but that he will either wish or be able to do the worst to us? Even without suspicion from our enemies, anyone with sense would laugh at these games, for they are no more serious than the toys with which youth amuses itself. But now, while they play in matters that are no game, it remains for those who see this to weep. For our affairs have slipped to this state of fortune from such dissensions, our internal discord having served the enemy's advantage, and it seems that the remnant of life among us must finally perish from the same disease. But may God turn the expected misfortunes only on those who cause them, and may He preserve this city not so much for us who possess it as for those who shake the hopes of faith and life upon it, whose hope is that His good providence will spare and save us, as it may be better for them. But as I read your letters, I am daily inspired with joy. For I do not cast them aside after one reading, but they lie by my head in bed as reminders of your love and virtue. They are so full of all kindness, so lacking in anything that could charm. And may you never cease to be such toward your friends. What our wonderful Lord commands to be done through us will be done. For we must care for what is beneficial to the soul and serve Him in whatever He commands, with which we also ask Him for all that is beneficial in life from God, for we will share in the good fortune sent to Him from above. But we must expect the best for Him, both for the many other good things with which He is adorned and especially for His piety toward God, by which He has chosen to abide by the laws of his ancestors. For it is not fitting for the divine to neglect him, through whom many are pious and perhaps more will be pious, when he gains greater power to aid the faith.

TO THE KING OF TREBIZOND

XXVIII. To the King of Trebizond (1449–1450).

† George Scholarius to the King of Trebizond.

1.You do not merely delight and adorn Asia and the part of Europe near us with the fame of the good things given to you by God, but you have also won the goodwill of all Italy and the cities and islands in between, through which the excellent Amiroutzes went as an ambassador. For even before, the rulers of Italy and their governments did not know what kind of man you are or how much land you rule, just as you did not know theirs. For in the greatness of your rule, you are inferior to none of them, and in virtue, you far surpass them, while in the dignity of your rule, you are most distinguished, which God has granted to you and your ancestors to the farthest extent. And for this reason, not only to the Italians but also to all beyond them, both Trebizond and its king are as well known as to those who rule in Asia. But now the embassy to them and the private individuals there have made your fame known to all, for the report about you has spread everywhere. Thus, you adorn the entire Greek race. For it is no small glory for us that you and your kingdom are so strong in all things. I marvel at your ambitious embassy, and I know the gratitude owed for the honor shown to the ambassador, though he is just and wise, for you would not have employed another for this service, having left aside such a man, who was likely to honor the sender in many ways. But now, having received what befits him and sufficient testimony of his virtue from your judgments, he will live more happily than before, and we give thanks to your majesty, sharing in the honor shown to our friend, just as we praise him for having offered his soul to you and his homeland in what he has undertaken.

2.May you long enjoy the best reputation, most wise king, and the praises with which your name is everywhere associated, and may you be a lasting example of all virtue to the young king. As for us, as if your kindness, which the golden letters of your majesty always bring, were not enough, you have also honored us with the most beautiful gift. This is the mark of a good ruler, a good king, devising various ways to show favor to those he loves. And if we, among all those who daily surround you, keep our goodwill toward you in all things no less than anyone else, God above will bear witness and persuade my king that this is so.

3.And many who know this, after the excellent Amiroutzes, add this to your praises: that you have won us over from afar, as if extending the hand of kindness.

TO THE NOMOPHYLAX IN THE PELOPONNESE

XXIX. To the Nomophylax in the Peloponnese (Around 1450).

† George Scholarius to the Nomophylax in the Peloponnese.

1.We owe you much gratitude both for sending us frequent letters and for sparing nothing in them to show your great love for us. But to tell the truth, everything is as before, for which we would give thanks. For you could have blamed your wanderings and travels on the island, the cares you daily endure for your own sake and for our relatives, and remained silent, thinking that we would not blame you for your silence, knowing these things. You would have been justified in counting our silence as well, if you wished to seek excuses for your own silence. But you, being more just than we who owe much, both do the work of a friend and stir us to do the same, and you have used persuasion to strengthen our friendship rather than to gather reasons to dissolve it—something many do not hesitate to do. But once you undertook to write, it was fitting to write such things, full of goodwill for me, skillfully composed and graceful, showing wisdom and a wholly good character. I also rejoice with you in the honor shown by the excellent master, as you no longer take account of the shadows, noise, and empty hopes among us, nor do you seek advisors in so clear a matter. For there, everything is a mass of good fortune, and one could not blame fortune for either. But among us, as you know, there are many words instead of wheat, by which many, having fallen asleep, have gone without supper, and many have regretted their vain hopes. If anyone were to advise you to leave such happiness and return to the misfortunes here, if he knew what he was saying, he would be worse than Sisyphus and Odysseus; if he did not know, he would be more ignorant than the Cyprian ox, as they say. But the things that seem to delight here, for which I know many have fled honors abroad and chosen to toil at home, are not, I say, the delights of sensible men but rather of women, who think there is no happiness beyond their familiar corner and spinning there, even if someone calls them to a kingdom, crying out like those being enslaved.

2.Hold fast, then, to what fair Achaea and its master give you, and do not heed those who advise otherwise, unless they bring you a message from God that you will do better by returning here, for they would rightly seem more persuasive than we who reason humanly. For know that we too often regret having chosen to risk the difficulties of the times when we could have lived more happily elsewhere. Yet other things, as you know, do not go very badly or sadly for us, nor do we lack much, though we should grieve if we failed to obtain what we need. But considering the battles and quarrels with our own people the greatest misfortune, we are greatly pained to be caught up in such evils and hope soon to be far from them, if God extends a guiding hand to our plans. For we would choose to live on herbs in peace elsewhere rather than enjoy other luxuries here while sharing in the falls, sufferings, and evils of others, and in general, what we do not wish to share.

3.Since I flee my homeland for these reasons alone, how could you not gladly remain there, freed from these things among others? As for the praises sung to you concerning your brother, our common father and teacher, because you have surpassed the other friends and deemed it right to send them to me first, you have acted very justly—not because I can improve your words in any way, as you yourself tell us without flattery, as one might think, but because you love me and preserve your praiseworthy reverence, gratifying yourself. But because of my goodwill and honor toward that blessed man, this and everything else done by you would not be unworthy or discordant. For if I were bound by an unshakable debt to him, it is also fitting for you, who

have shown yourself good in all things concerning him, to lack nothing in demonstrating goodwill. For you know that the honors bestowed by the laws on good men and the care for human virtue are naturally owed to men, even if no external reward is expected. But if I were to consider, apart from other things, the goodwill toward the entire race, in which he seemed great and truly such, I would find every kind of honor, and I would neglect none of what I found. For this reason, you should pay even greater attention to us, being good and knowing well how to preserve what is just toward the homeland. You would not justly marvel if, until now, we have loved the words hastily composed then for his piety, perhaps able to add something. On the contrary, you would marvel at us, and it would seem to you that we are quicker in such matters, knowing well the early history of your family and his progress in this life, from which you are accustomed to compose encomia, those occupied with such discourses, and being his brother and caring for what befits a brother, able to pay him no less than anyone the honors due from words. Therefore, we expected to see what you might wish to do and, having received the signal from you first, thus tried to add to the good things of that father, if there is any power in our words. But now you have done what we expected, and I, having the discourse in my hands, found all his virtue beyond all hope as I examined it, though I knew you were well prepared for this before. But this too, it seems, is the work of the father's prayer, that you surpass yourself and allow no one else associated with him to touch such a subject, much less to rival the skill of the brother. Therefore, I have decided to praise the noble man and, according to your laws, to withdraw, thinking that this wonderful achievement will suffice for him and you for future glory, to which no one could contribute anything better. But that even such as it is, it falls far short of his worth, and what we all know of him, even you would say.

TO DEMETRIUS RAOUL KABAKES

XXX. To Demetrius Raoul Kabakes (1450–1451).

† George Scholarius to my lord, my brother, Lord Demetrius Raoul Kabakes.

1.My lord, my brother, I pray to God for your health and that you may prosper in all things as much as possible and according to your will, being healthy myself by His grace and prospering in all things except one: that the sorrows of friends, or indeed of those near me, disturb my pleasure in private pursuits. For it is not possible either to shut the door on them or not to share their sorrow. Thus are the affairs of the unfortunate Romans, so that the present brings cause for grief and much fear for the future to both those who share in their affairs and those who examine them. But may the only Physician of such things heal them.

2.I was greatly delighted to learn of the peace made there, and I do not cease to give thanks to the most fortunate lords, the master and the mistress, for having won much praise for themselves by this act, adding to their many previous good deeds this greatest one, their concession to peace, testifying to us their praisers and shutting the mouths of their enemies. They will undoubtedly receive a great reward for such virtue from the Lord, and some necessary benefit will accompany all the affairs of Christians because of such peace. If ever, now especially, they and all the rulers and co-rulers of the Romans must aim at the common good, for our affairs are in great danger, as one might guess from many signs.

3.Gemistos wrote to us kindly, and we thanked him for his support. For this is what should happen among us; the rest makes no difference, whether judged by him or by us, or by the listeners, whether wise or otherwise disposed, or by private individuals. I also greatly appreciated that he rightly opposed that Latin nonsense. We write to him at greater length, thanking him both for not disdaining to oppose it and for doing so well. For even if he has some points against the opponents, we, grasping his purpose as most pious, both as one advocating for the truth and as a friend, always and now especially contend vigorously against the opponents, and we will show that what seems said by the opponents was not necessarily said, drawing it to a more pious meaning, and we will demonstrate that it was wisely and necessarily said, and we will generally oversee his work in a friendly manner. Thus, for many reasons, and we rejoice most in such hopes for him. It is also more glorious for us to contend with a friend's work, true and wise, and to fight against the nonsense of others. For we will also seek other fitting honors while advocating for the friend's work against them. Know that they did not show us that nonsense but sent it secretly to Gemistos, thinking to seize his judgment against us, clever in many ways; but later, seeing it, we laughed. Some, however, oppose it, writing replies, as I hear, since it has fallen into their hands. But I do not much care for such things.

4.I ask that you always write to us with full information, specifying what you approve of here, as we will do. May you live many years.

TO THE GRAND DUKE

XXXI. To the Grand Duke (1449?).

† To the Grand Duke.

1.God has given you to this city as a common good in every need and at all times, and to each individually as a father, guardian, and friend, gentle by nature, benefiting them, as He has often raised up such natures for the good fortune of the Romans, of which you are no less, and rewarding you for your truly golden purpose, which He foresaw from afar, and wishing to prepare great rewards for you, fitting your purpose. No one would write such things as flattery. For one who praises you alone does not fear this blame, and I would boast of being entirely free from this human weakness, so that even my inability to use this art makes me seem no less unpleasant to some who can benefit.

2.The city owes you golden crowns, that is, many and great rewards; but if it neither gives nor will give them, this must be attributed to the times and the customs prevailing in it. But let the city itself, preserved and at peace with its enemies and as prosperous as possible, be your crown instead, for all these are gifts of God and your efforts and care after the excellent king. And of all the praises, prayers, and songs of all, what could be a better testimony of your virtue and care for all, or rather, what could be more fortunate than these? Therefore, know that you are a common ornament to the world, and rejoice in having received many good things from above, even if something sorrowful, as is human, happens, considering it a small and weak test of providence and an obstacle to complete happiness, and hoping that He who gave the good things will also care for deliverance from the worse.

3.How can I describe my own case? For if I count all human relationships, I find yours toward me the greatest and warmest. Therefore, let the father be silent, let the mother be set aside, let all such things be set aside, and let what is most fitting be said: that wishing to preserve the image and likeness of the highest providence toward me as much as possible, what do you not say, what do you not do for me, what do you refrain from giving when you can? Of these, I could justly say that I receive goodwill from you, but for the rest, I am clearly ashamed of myself, being so greatly honored. And so, for your kindness toward us, since I cannot repay you except with prayers and thanks and by offering my soul for you with joy, you will have the rewards reserved for you above, some now and others hereafter. Therefore, wishing to add to the honors and thanks, do not consider our worthlessness, nor allow it to hinder you, but knowing that you have One who will repay, use your nature, or rather, conquer yourself both toward others and toward me.

4.The horse has come to you, and with it many thanks. For I no longer need it, having nothing to do and wishing to rest my body, which has been greatly wearied by illness. Perhaps, when the king returns and allows me to address him (for it is just, if God wills), I will ask for this, when you will persuade the most excellent king of all, as you yourself will first be reasonably persuaded by us. I think he too will not delay the gift, having now at last received clear proof of my goodwill toward him and knowing that we ask for what is just and most readily granted.

5.But these things are for later; now know that we are very aware of the good beginnings of quiet and rejoice greatly in the change of place, hoping also that the change of habit, or rather of character, God granting, will please even more. We are troubled by only one thing, the discomfort of the body, from which there is no way to be delivered without a miracle.

RESPONSE TO LUKE NOTARAS

XXXII. Response to Luke Notaras, Son-in-Law of the Emperor (1449?).

† Scholarius's response to the same mediator and son-in-law of the emperor.

1.What has happened to you, most admirable of men? By rejecting praise and claiming that we derive these commendations from our own nature and skill rather than from your superior qualities, you bestow upon yourself what is not fitting, while also weaving together other matters that are true marks of wisdom—the kind that Hesiod, along with all the wise, esteems—as well as understanding, magnanimity, and genuine friendship. Unknowingly, you have experienced what Socrates did, revealing yourself to be truly the one whom we have set forth in our writings, or rather, those who desired to touch upon what is good in moderation have fallen far short of what is proper. Truly, you are a disciple and companion of Socrates, fulfilling his counsels so well in deed that you could be counted among those who conversed with him in Athens, and if he had spoken of what is advantageous, he would not have died. Socrates, though he utterly denied it, was judged wise by Apollo, and you are the common father of all, an unwavering pillar of the city, as Homer says, and filled with every good thing by the judgment of God and all men. No one will heed your denials, nor will they set aside the testimony of your deeds to credit your humility, unless they consider this alone as sufficient proof of your virtue.

2.I was delighted, as you can imagine, by your letter, and as I read it repeatedly, I marveled at the nature and mind of the sender, which not only refrained from seeking glory from words but also immediately obeyed. You have made your soul softer than wax toward every good thing, so that if I were to speak then of all the good qualities you possess, I would have grieved at having said nothing about wisdom and the art of rhetoric. Now, willingly or unwillingly, having omitted most things, I do not think it a great loss if these too remain unspoken.

3.If you speak of solecisms and similar errors, I am not an exacting examiner of such things in the letters of friends, even if they are among those who pride themselves on precision for safety's sake. Do not make much of this, nor think that I lack great experience in these matters; rather, rejoice that you are free from such trifles. For I have seen few who are not greatly caught up in these things, and most of those who are well-trained in them have their brains in their heels, or I know not where. Let it suffice for you to speak all things timely, to persuade all of what is just, and to manage your words, so to speak, fittingly with both persons and subjects, to begin where necessary, to elaborate and conclude well and gracefully, to analyze precisely, and to present everything in order—these are the greatest parts of rhetoric, and with these, we will inscribe you among the choirs of orators, even if unwilling. In these, the company of Themistocles and your own excelled, and by these, they guided affairs. The rest belong to sophists and grammarians, who revolve around the gates of the powerful, as someone has said, and who spend their whole lives disputing over a single accent, shooting their arrows in the dark, accomplishing and knowing nothing more than this, for which the Latin proverb declares the pure grammarian a pure donkey.

4.Speak thus well and send letters to your friends. All who have understanding will admire the depth of your thought, the order of your ideas, and the natural beauty of your words, not the external adornment and elaborate arrangement of letters, for even in these you are so distinguished that one might say, upon seeing your letters, that you have risen straight from the Muses and their study, though you may stumble in some

places, yet you use most things well. You were not long in the schools, nor is it likely, having immediately engaged in affairs, that you could retain those studies over such a time.

5.I will never cease to be grateful to you for those letters, as they have provided me with many occasions for joy. The greatest of all was that you addressed every part of my letter, something I could scarcely have done myself, though I have made such things my art.

6.Where should I place the goodwill that shines through all and the nobility of your soul, so clearly manifested in your letters? If you command us to confidently make known our needs, this is indeed a great and customary gift you give us, though it is otherwise superfluous. For you, already foreseeing our needs, anticipate our requests. You even sent us a physician before we could clearly inform you of anything, and he seemed to us quite sufficient, so that we no longer need to concern ourselves with others.

7.May Christ the King preserve forever the house that abounds in every good thing and fulfills all good desires, and may the children of its father and master, equal in virtue but better in fortune, succeed to the care of public affairs and the providence of each, when He leads him to a happy old age and a blessed end.

RESPONSE TO LUKE NOTARAS

XXXIII. Response to Luke Notaras (1449?).

† Scholarius's response to the mediator.

1.My holy lord, you have sweetened us in every way, and with your letter, you have soothed the longing that the memory of your presence and conversation continually fixes in my soul, increasing it each day, yet somehow healing it when it finds some symbols of you, even such as these. With your sweet gifts (for I do not now care for the Greeks), you will comfort us for many days, though we have little, and if we can have anything, we are accustomed to rejoice more in simplicity. But when a friend, or rather a benefactor, sends gifts, it is blameless to use them. If you feed us with meat, even game, we will eat it gladly but digest it with discomfort. For all such things, except for the well-seasoned and easily prepared partridges, trouble the stomach with its poor condition and looseness.

2.Do not concern yourself with meat, then, but only love us as you do, and pray that we may be entirely free from troubles. For we are still troubled by many thoughts, with much at home and in private left uncorrected, and when we find the longed-for pure leisure, thus we may please both God and friends. If you wish to comfort us, do so with simple gifts like these, when they arise, and with plainer comforts. You will know well the thoughts that trouble us, as we will reveal them to you when the time is right, and when we will need the help of God and your cooperation to be freed from them.

3.The truly golden letters that remain with us will produce another in due time, no longer like the first, but greater and better. Do not expect to move us with the quantity of your letters; just as you contrived to send three instead of one, so I will contrive to match their greatness, not wishing to cease but to reap the greatest pleasure from such contests, since I do not have the face-to-face conversation that I preferred above all.

4.Farewell and prosper with all your household, O best of rulers.

TO EMPEROR CONSTANTINE

XXXIV. To Emperor Constantine (1450).

† Written when he withdrew from the palace and the monastery of Pantokrator, where he had previously lived as a layman, and went to the monastery of Charsianites, preparing to take the monastic habit:

† Scholarius to Emperor Constantine:

1.O most serene emperor, I have often addressed you, adorning your virtue with my art and myself with words about it. Now, I send you this final message, and through you, to all my fellow citizens, as the epilogue of my words and deeds. But listen calmly, for I will not seem to be speaking in vain.

2.That I, not yet thirty years old, firmly chose and vowed to Christ to leave public life as something burdensome and to turn to private life—a life full of philosophy, the best hopes for the future, and every good thing, as one might say—is known to almost all my fellow citizens. Your majesty, I believe, has also spoken of this to many others in the Peloponnese and elsewhere. For it pleased you to know my thoughts and to recount them with praise to others, since you were once moved by God to regard me favorably. As for why I have not yet shown this resolve in action but have remained in the earlier tumult until this day, I will explain the reasons to you and to all. You, along with a few others to whom I have revealed all my thoughts, know these reasons well. But in this discourse, it is necessary for all to know the truth, so that they do not wander in the night, each grasping at shadows.

3.The first reason was the care of my aging parents and other relatives. For I thought it would not be pure piety to neglect them, especially since they were such as deserved respect for their virtue, and I believed that seeking tranquility would be seen as impiety if I abandoned my family for my own good, when it was possible to first fulfill my duty to them and then attend to my own concerns without fear. I knew that Paul also declared neglect of one's family worse than unbelief, and his teachings, as if delivered straight from heaven, must be heeded. Moreover, I could not bear to let it appear to those who did not know that the emperor's anger had driven me to the yoke of Christ, forcing me unwillingly into tranquility, as many do who, fleeing one evil, fall into a lesser one. Later, when all domestic matters seemed settled by divine will, and the emperor began to show clear favor—as all know (for he had condemned the excessive harshness of those who thought I should suffer harm, and he did not wish to further indulge their impulses by harming one who did not deserve it)—I thought it time to fulfill my desire in action, as no excuse for delay remained. I immediately began preparations. For it was necessary to lay aside much worldly clutter, to loosen all the bonds that life had tied around me over the years, and to run lightly to the place of tranquility, clothed in a single tunic and a mat, with my mind set on God alone and a number of books sufficient for such a purpose.

4.While I was engaged in these preparations, alas, the emperor passed away, and turmoil filled the affairs of state. Everything was rife with suspicion, and the arrows of slanderers were again aimed at me with greater boldness. The pretext was that I had persuaded those in holy orders to doubt your glory and to delay the honor they customarily bestow on pious emperors. I agreed with those who had so decided, acting for your benefit and the faith, but I paid no heed to the fabrications of the many. All who shared this opinion felt the same, and no one was so wicked as to destroy the faith while cooperating with it, or to stir up enemies against the homeland with domestic strife. Nor do we know if anyone desired such things, for if we had indulged

them, we would have become wicked and waged war against all that is just. Nor could we openly accuse anyone of such things, but we blamed only those who were clearly caught violating the law and who refused to yield to achieve their desires, no matter the cost. The desire for greater things is natural to all people, small and great, and one can say of even the most just, "He would have taken," or "He would have done." No one is free from this passion. But those who restrain themselves, saying, "If it were permitted," or "If it were blameless," or "If it were likely to succeed," are counted among the good, while those who disregard such considerations are revealed as wicked. If someone is content with what they have, mastering unreasonable desires, they are no more to be blamed for imagining and desiring greater things than for restraining themselves and preferring what is beneficial, the law, and sound reasoning over apparent pleasure. Such a person is worthy of much praise and blessing. For this reason, we honor many with divine honors, not because they abstained from all pleasure or were unmoved by reason in the face of temptation, but because, with their reason opposing their desires, they chose to save their souls eternally, disregarding present things, and took the harder and more difficult path. For human virtue is a good achieved through difficulty, and this is the tribulation and narrowness of the path that leads to life. Therefore, no one sinned against you and justice, O emperor, nor were we, as the slanderers dared to fabricate, accomplices in sin. All that was mere nonsense, old wives' tales, childish fears, and the inventions of small-minded men. Those who believed them were those who prepared to demand great rewards from you, as if they had helped you secure the throne, which was under threat from others—though, to speak the truth, those who wish to act against justice are not deterred by those who provoke, revile, and spread rumors against them, but by those who advise them well, persuade them to be quiet, and have the influence to persuade out of goodwill.

5.I too would have acted thus if I had noticed anyone attempting injustice. What persuaded me to delay the honor due to you from the Church, along with the opinion of many others and my reverence for the Church and its benefit—which it is holy to prefer above all human considerations—and certain other thoughts aimed at your benefit, was the clamor of the slanderers and the suspicion that my affection for you might harm you in the rivalry over sacred matters. This persuaded me first to abandon my resolve and then to persuade others to do the same—though even now I would not deny that those thoughts were beneficial, and I would confidently say that the men would have acted better if they had not been forced by those unreasonable clamors to undo what had been decided. In time, O excellent emperor, you will perceive the truth of these matters, unless some unexpected intervention from God occurs. But to suspect that I plotted anything against you or your rule was fitting only for my enemies. Indeed, they did not even suspect it themselves, for they were not so simple, but wishing to harm me, they fabricated it. For it would have been strange if I, who had previously prayed for your greater glory, now envied and opposed you when God granted it, especially since I had failed in your friendship, as all know, and you above all know well. When you were about to repay me with greater fortune, would I have chosen to grieve you and disregard the goodwill accumulated over many years and occasions, placing my hopes on uncertain things? I, who would allow no one to say they were more eager than I to foresee and safeguard the common good and the long-established laws? I pass over the thoughts that discouraged me from desiring worldly affairs, for these escaped most people. But they should have judged from clearer evidence and not dared to slander virtue so shamelessly. For it would be as absurd to accuse me of such things as to say that Archimedes betrayed Syracuse, he who was stretched out devising its salvation and for a long time seemed alone to save it from the enemy. Or to accuse

all fathers of feeding their sons unwillingly, and all sons of wishing to destroy their fathers if they could. I think even the founder of this city, if he rose from the dead to dispute your rule, would find no one to oppose him but me, and I would risk the loss of the lawsuit to oppose him, for your sake and your goodwill. And now I value nothing above your goodwill, I consider nothing more pleasing than your good repute, and I would exchange my life itself for you to live long and achieve much, attaining eternal glory. So greatly have I been captivated by your virtues, which the envious, failing to see, prattled about. Yet, as a wise Latin once said, to believe that someone who has once erred in a certain way will always err in the same way is foolish, not because it must necessarily be so, but because human fault-finding, grasping at the pretext of past wrongdoing, sometimes condemns even the innocent. Therefore, those who choose to live blamelessly must beware of seeming even remotely guilty of any charge. But who can accuse me of any wrong, small or great, against my country, my benefactor, my friend, or anyone else, for which I might be justly condemned, following the custom of the many? But what is strange, when even now, after the evidence of events and your excellent judgment in my favor, many still fabricate such things? They hope to hollow out the rock by constantly dripping water and to overcome your firmness with the frequency of their plots against me, just as they often swayed the opinion of that excellent emperor until their scheme was exposed and they could no longer be trusted. Previously, they misinterpreted my words and deeds, fabricated stories, prophesied, and divined, seeming plausible and depriving me of no small external honors, of which they themselves made much. So now they spread rumors, stir up suspicions, predict, and do whatever they chance upon. Their foundation is the interest on their loans, for they say, "Such a one is honored by so-and-so," "A ruler in another land esteems him greatly," "Another city," "A private individual of great influence."

6.If I desired greater things than my God-given preparation for life allowed, perhaps their fabrications would have some basis, as many who have fallen in love with difficult enterprises have spared no device to achieve their desire, thinking it no great evil to abandon God and friends and to expose their country to the utmost danger to attain their desires. But having overlooked even what I could have had in my homeland, as befits those who live contentedly, how could I wish to gain fame by wronging and harming others? And if I wished to be wicked, gaining nothing but harmed by my enemies, who catch me in my wickedness and persuade others to hate those who could help them, why would I not rather hunt for good fortune with virtue, as they would say, and by serving those I ought? For surely they would not hate me if I indulged them, nor be displeased if I served them. If even with wickedness I had fared worse, what would have prevented me, God forbid, from living in Rome with the highest honors, or managing the affairs of my homeland out of friendship for them, and wishing to gratify them in all things? Or, if others gained something from virtue and the reputation of wisdom, and if someone gave them wealth, there would be no envy; but if I sacrificed to them, I alone would remain unrewarded, though with God's help both could moderately be mine, as no wise man would deny. This is not so, this is not so. Therefore, I never gained, nor will I gain, anyone's friendship by such contrivances. Both private individuals and rulers who do not envy the good rejoice in me for my virtue, knowing that I have chosen to suffer for virtue when necessary, having given many timely proofs of this, and they rejoice, honor, praise, and help me as each is able. For otherwise they would not have used their power, which God gave them, to benefit those who care for virtue, since it is not possible, or is very difficult, for the same men to care for virtue and to acquire such power. They also gain from me praise and the reputation of being good by rejoicing in the good, nothing else. For what could come from ants to

lions? And for all this, I owe thanks to God. For from Him comes whatever has made me enviable to others, just as I alone am responsible for my faults, for which I am judged by these spotless ones.

7.Seeing, then, that such nonsense was sprouting up immediately after the emperor's departure, I resolved to make no move of my own but to await your arrival, standing firm. From there, I would act as seemed best to the higher power. And I did not fear that you would be led to believe the fabrications—far from such fear, knowing your wisdom and that you are more convinced of me than I wish. But I feared that my enemies would seize on the change in my life and show the simpler folk that they had accused me rightly; that I, fearing the emperor, fled frankness, as if I had already condemned myself; and that I hid somewhere, honoring myself with what even the emperor would condemn, exacting penalties. And many would think so, unable to penetrate the fabrication but seeing only its plausible surface, whether from simplicity or because they themselves wished to think the worst of me. And I thought it a great and terrible thing, if after enduring so long for the sake of not seeming to do wrong, I should now, through negligence, seem worse, since to abandon public life out of anger at being wronged and afraid would give greater grounds for accusation to those who wish to blame. I also wished to indulge a private passion and, remaining in my station, to see the most pleasant sight, in the form I had long prayed for, and to delight in the deeds with which I had often delighted myself in imagination, both alone and with many others, stirring up discourse about you, O emperor, and to address you and hear you speak in that form, and to stand before you seated in imperial state and to experience in all things one who had reigned well, in which I saw you destined to reign, and to rejoice in the kind of good fortune, and to offer a gift from my art, and to meet privately about many things, and to dare to offer some advice, gathering opinions from many who are not likely to err, and to assist you in the preliminaries of rule, in which there is greater difficulty, and to nourish myself sufficiently with the experience of long-desired affairs, and to run lightly to that life. For I am not among the most resolute, to be unmoved and unyielding in all things, not softened by familiarity with good rulers and men or by goodwill toward the common good, and so to seem to act in a way that neglects imperial goodwill, throws away wealth, renounces all honors, and disregards all the pleasures of the palace, many already present and more undoubtedly expected. To seem thus to some would neither profit nor harm me, who gain no pleasure from it, but it would benefit those who think so, whom it would not be fitting to disregard, nor to think less of the benefit of those who care for the love of their brothers. And I do not say this lightly, but it was easy for those who judged something base about me and my change to err also about the divine. For opinions about affairs sometimes change with opinions about the men who manage them, and it happens that those who are ignorant of what is right in one matter judge wrongly about both. And it would seem terrible to me to destroy some through small-mindedness in the course of my life, whose salvation I would buy at any price.

8.I remained resolved in these matters, and by the best fortune, O most excellent emperor, you came as a wise governor to this city, sent by God. I pass over your other deeds, for they are the subject of the highest praise, and the present discourse cannot contain such breadth. But all my plans turned out as I had hoped. By your actions, you showed that I had deliberated well, and the schemes of the wicked were immediately dissolved. I now enjoy your former goodwill with an increase befitting the occasion. The door of the chamber is opened to me as usual, the emperor's mind is open, and no one begrudges me standing before the door whenever I wish to enter and speak. In the halls, I sit not far from those closest to the emperor, and I serve again in the same capacity, but with a much better demeanor—for I was not idle before—and everyone

who sees the present state of things may hope that I will serve in even greater ways. So great are the signs you give for such expectations. I did not ask for gifts of entry, for I did not need them, but you were ready to give them. Indeed, it was necessary, and you have shown great concern to inquire about this. For you did not think it right, while you reign, for my house to remain in need. And when you learned that I was content with what I had, you were pleased. In short, you value my service so highly that you even wished to have me as a close companion, imitating those emperors who did not keep their philosophers far from their cloaks, nor did they see a great distance between empire and philosophy. For Aristotle was no less honored by Alexander than Parmenion, nor did Augustus prefer Agrippa much over Arius, nor did Trajan delight in any other as he did in Dio, nor did either of the Antonines neglect the company of Epictetus, nor was Themistius a mere pastime for Julian, who in his letters called him his dearest brother, though he was far inferior to the great Themistius. Your father, too, showed himself a great emperor by honoring and revering such men—I mean the divine Cabasilas and Cydones, before he turned against his mother. And it seemed that they honored the emperor by being honored by him, as if it were an addition to his virtues to honor such men, and for this reason, he was more esteemed. This they showed, though they were unwillingly raised to honors and did not enjoy them for long. And you, extending your zeal toward wise emperors, would not hold us in less honor, knowing that while others only know how to serve the emperor's will, we also know how to advise where necessary and to speak boldly when you might benefit from being stung. And while they love and serve you for their own sake, we strive that you may be praised and loved by the best and show deeds worthy of remembrance. We are content with little, serving you with goodwill and the ability to benefit you in any way, while they need much, and it is likely that in their disorder, they will incur hatred. For you cannot gratify everyone in everything, especially in these times, which have brought the misfortune of untimely human desires, by which there is fear of losing everything—both you, O emperor, and this city—if we who are under your command strive after these shadows, neglecting those who could save us, which will give the enemy much hope for attacks against us. Therefore, you have so willed and still will it, and you will not blame yourself—this I know very well. For I know what is needed and with whom you will adorn your reign, and that I would not be inferior to any of those you might choose, not so much in ability as in affection and simplicity of mind suited to the task. Seeing this, I rejoiced and attended each day, wishing to be filled with the pleasure of it and to make the emperor's benevolence clear to all, so that no one would dare to be a false interpreter of my actions henceforth.

9.And sufficient time has now passed for this purpose, and all has been well woven for us by the providence that guides you. And if anyone, succeeding in political affairs, were to forget philosophy, carried away by the pleasures of the palace, and give leisure to his promises to God, this would surely happen to me for a long time, and all my friends, except my closest ones, and even my enemies, each moved by some desire or fear, foresee it. Thus, all that comes from you, O emperor, is seen by us as attractive and full of every good fortune. Considering this the time when all that was unpleasant and hostile to me from that excellent emperor had been dissolved—or rather, using the present fortune, which is much more favorable, for the voyage to philosophy—I now begin, with God's help, the most excellent voyage. For approaching old age does not allow me to remain idle any longer, and many illnesses persuade me of this, which I hope will trouble and grieve me less in that life. I have already had my fill of the tumult of the palace and the honors tied to it, and wealth seems to me like a potter's clay compared to the gains that will come from leisure. Farewell to public

service and its lofty names! I do not wish to judge others, being accountable to God for much. I do not wish to demand rewards for your benefactions, lest I be excluded from divine grace. And though I write diligently in books, I do not wish to be recorded among the sinners. I cannot partake of the highest council and also share in its accusations. A loaf of bread and water, a small shelter, meditation on death, and attention to God, as far as I am able with His help, and the company of pure friends who say what is right and hear what is worthy of effort—these suffice for me. Besides, I fear that my promises may be harshly exacted, with death snatching me away before I fulfill them. For there is no escape, with every excuse removed.

10.We have served our country well for most of our life, teaching, writing, judging, advising, sailing, presiding over doctrines, both privately and publicly, in truth, both without strife and in struggle against opponents. We have cared for our parents, both in life and after their departure to God, and all that the law requires for such, we have devoted to them as far as possible. We have overseen our relatives, though they are few, in a way that no one could fault, and now through us, their fortunes are better, and God will add more. The emperor is well-disposed toward us; the senate is friendly; our city is entirely won over, except for those who fault our noble frankness, or rather blame our ancestors, saying that for so many years they erred and sinned, as if they themselves are better than them in every way—and may their blasphemy turn against those who utter it. What, then, will persuade me to delay and hesitate and neglect those commitments? To carry out my decisions in silence, without giving notice to you or others, O emperor, I considered the mark of arrogance, and besides, I need some time for preparation, and I must consider the place. For cliffs are everywhere, and in a short time, it will be revealed where one may practice philosophy more safely, and whether I must remain in my homeland or seek another land. And having parted from my parents once and for all, I must now seek the remainder with careful consideration, and while still seated here with these honors, I must try to purify my soul. Perhaps we will live here for a long time, or perhaps we will change our attire sooner, as God wills. For from Him, we will await the signal with patience. But from this day, as you see, I have set my soul's purpose on philosophy, and for this reason, I must send this apology to silence the mouths of the envious. I pray that there may be none such.

11.For these reasons, and no other, I forewarn you, O emperor, of what I am about to do, and I ask you, willingly and joyfully, to send me to the yoke of the Lord. Pray that I may remain a faithful servant to Him, as I have been to you, and that I may bear His yoke more gratefully than yours in the few days that remain. I bore the yoke of your predecessor for many years, for there is no better or greater master to whom one may come after despising Him. Being truly subject to Him, I will also be subject to you and all creation through Him, for without divine submission, neither we nor your rule will prosper.

12.I will say two things, which I do not remember having dared to say so publicly before. For I was never so just, nor perhaps will I be, as to accuse myself in a public speech, nor have I ever been burdensome to anyone by praising myself, nor has anyone ever heard me boasting greatly. But out of goodwill toward you, I have been led to both. In other matters, consider me no better than anyone, even the least, in what pertains to private life and what does not touch public affairs. But in devotion to country, ruler, benefactors, friends, piety toward God, laws, and all justice, count me among the most faithful, in the first rank and foremost. You will not err in this, so let others think what they will about the present, but you, take no base view of it, and only pray that the strength to follow our good purpose may come to us from God—or rather, that our actions may be in harmony with our purpose and lead to its fulfillment. For we will need the greatest prayers

for this. Since I know that some will misinterpret this to you, they will no longer be able to harm me. For I, not only this city, but the whole earth cannot be a place for me if I so desire. I speak of the true and abiding self, and this excellent doctrine will be explained to you by some who know. Therefore, they will not grieve me by exiling me from my homeland, for they can do nothing greater against me, unless they also grant much, breaking those bonds unwillingly, by which we willingly owe it to those who bore us to share their dangers. But you, O most excellent emperor, they will greatly harm by implanting an evil opinion of me in you, and through you, they will inflict harm on all others. And you will owe an account to God for their harm, not having well fortified yourself against such intrusions. I too would owe a debt if I did not bear this witness. But now I am innocent, and I will not be ashamed when my most sacred head stands with us before that tribunal, and the emperors before you, the noble guardians of this city, as one who has failed in any duty owed to you and those under your rule. May you be seen as inferior to none of those excellent men. †

TO EMPEROR CONSTANTINE

Correspondence B. Letters Signed: Gennadius Scholarius (from the end of 1450).

I. To Emperor Constantine.

† To Emperor Constantine, from Gennadius, monk Scholarius:

1.But it is not permitted for monks, O most excellent emperor, to be nourished by rare and hard-to-find foods. The laws of self-control are not only about the measure and kind of food but also about its worth. To exceed these limits is called gluttony, and it is counted among the sins leading to death. Yet you, I know not how, deem it right for us to transgress the law, preparing a royal table for us, whose food ought to harmonize with this Christ-like monastic habit. Another might say this, but we would never think that your virtue would wish to trouble us without cause, and so we seek how we might nourish ourselves according to the royal decree while preserving our own law. The great emperor, they say, the root of your virtues, honored his beloved monks in this way, and they tolerated acting beyond the rule, not wishing to nullify a royal decree that seemed not without reason. For it seemed that for monks to concern themselves with such foods and to seek how they might be nourished by more costly things would be the greatest lack of self-control and a dissolution of what they profess. Otherwise, they should not have undertaken the austere and simple life if they would later need such luxury and tumult. But the food sent from the royal table does not differ from their simple fare, for it comes to them without their labor, just as the purest bread came to Elijah and many other holy men of old, or the sweetest food, the manna, to the Jews.

2.Being most wise in all things, you devised this noble plan, which is persuasive to all. Therefore, you imitate your father, and we obey you, just as our predecessors did not think it right to oppose him. And you seem either to have received this reasoning from him, along with many other useful things, or to have discovered it yourself, seeing its great persuasiveness, and thus wished to delight us without danger. We, however, did not previously know the reason, for there was no need to inquire, but now, compelled to investigate for the first time (and such things come to the knowledge of emperors), we have discerned your intention and believe we are not far from the mark. Persuaded by such reasoning, we have been nourished by your gift. If you have another, better reason to give, do not begrudge us but send it along with the gift when you send it again. If there is none better, this one suffices to persuade us to enjoy what you send. There is no fear that by often eating this creature, instead of being oppressed, we might secretly fatten the flesh, for they say that the flesh of aquatic animals has a great natural affinity with human flesh, and so it is also with land animals. Therefore, they share names with them, and those nourished by them are likewise nourished and delighted. For even you cannot often taste this creature, as our sea produces few such. Therefore, those who hide it, when caught, are fined heavily by the public treasury, and a law commands this. This law is known from afar by those who tremble, and when they catch this creature, they shout loudly, lest some informer see them and accuse them of wishing to hide it, if they could. For even the wish to hide is punishable.

3.But these things are from that earlier letter of yours, the reading of which delights me, for we do not wish you to think that we nourish less goodwill and frankness in this habit, though it is natural to add more. For freed from the great dust of the palace, which troubled us along with others, whether rightly or not, as affairs pressed so violently, we now see our friends with purer eyes and judge their actions more clearly. What

persuaded me to write to you, O best of men, are two things: I thank you for the gift, for you seemed to care for us monks, and thus even if they wished, they could not neglect one whom the great emperor honors, though even before this they treated us moderately and in a way no one could fault. But now they are even more zealous for our affairs. Even if we were otherwise disposed, it would be fitting for us to bear it, but it is better that they are more well-disposed to us and that you seem to be the cause of this. Secondly, I ask again about Venier, if you have not already brought the decree that will nourish him.

TO MANUEL RAOUL OISES

II. To Manuel Raoul Oises (1451-1452).

† Gennadius to the most prudent and pious ruler, Lord Manuel Raoul Oises:

1."Do you wish not to fear authority?" says the blessed Paul in his letter to the Romans. "Do what is good, and you will have praise from it, for it is God's servant for your good. But if you do evil, be afraid, for it does not bear the sword in vain. It is God's servant, an avenger to execute wrath on the wrongdoer." Rejoice, then, most pious Manuel, for you have fulfilled the work of God's service by the law. Rejoice, for you have polished the sword given to you by God against the persecutors of Christ. I would wish that you and every ruler established by God over a nation or city would slay all the sinners of the earth in the mornings, to cut off from the city of the Lord all who work iniquity. But if you spare other evildoers and give license to the corrupt and scabby sheep to destroy and ruin whole flocks, at least expel these impious and destructive Hellenizers—or rather, these shameless apostates from piety—from this present life by fire, iron, water, and every means, if you wish to be true Christians or care for the salvation of your subjects. Do you not see the evil already advancing from being allowed, and that detestable and demonic Juvenal living in Christian states and corrupting those near him, and some others, some of whom taught him this apostasy, and others who were badly initiated by him? Who is unaware of this evil growing daily? Who among the pious is not grieved by it? I have cried out and forewarned all openly. But some of the powerful laughed, others disbelieved, and others thought it was slander concocted by me out of envy for those unfortunate ones. Unfortunate they are, even if they prosper in external things, for they have lost the hope of salvation, our Jesus, though among us the writings of that thrice-accursed man convict them, if indeed they should be called men and not children in folly and foolishness, and beasts in their madness against their own salvation. For in those writings, he commends others in the Peloponnese, Aenos, and elsewhere, who became part of his faction and shared his views. Pious men, taking these writings, brought them to me, though they were not as bad as those later discovered by your piety. For in these later ones, as we have heard, there was no lack of impiety and nonsense against the holy and divine things, but in those earlier ones, our sacred things are preserved. He secretly promoted Hellenism, calling the Hellenic polyarchy and polytheism a monarchy, and spouting such nonsense. But he did not yet dare to rise up against our sacred things, fearing your excellent decree from afar. But from the fringe, I recognize the cloth, and from the claws, the lion—or rather, as the proverb says, the donkey. I know well, even as rumor still spreads the harm he does to those near him, for he was bolder in speech than in writing, hoping to escape the notice of the pious. I was indignant against him and his like, whom he proclaimed in his writings, especially because they were the cause of this ecclesiastical confusion. Even without the testimony of those writings, it is evident that no one would despise the true ancestral doctrine and dare to transgress the decrees of so many fathers over so long a time unless he had first despised the whole faith. For our fathers have not left undefined for us the matters concerning the Latins or any other people, but kings, patriarchs, bishops, monks, and wise men, both privately and in common councils, have defined each point with terrifying threats. They were neither ignorant of these new and recent doctrines that have troubled the world and divided the Church, nor did they neglect them, nor were they enemies of peace. Nor would anyone who blames our fathers for all evils and ascribes to us all the better things judge rightly about such matters. On the contrary, it would be fitting. For they were innumerable, wise, noble,

dispassionate, God-loving, and judged the things of God with God. What kind of men we are is evident; we are not worthy to be compared even to their shadows or their refuse. Is it not, then, more folly than unbelief and impiety to depart from the decree of those fathers concerning the least of doctrines? And if anyone dares this, surely he cherishes some other opinion in his soul, having neglected the Christian faith, thinking he will live more gloriously and pleasantly, as happened to those of whom he speaks in his writings. This was written before the council in Italy.

2.Seeing these things sprouting from afar, I was angry, displeased, and grieved. I pass over other matters. But learning that this thrice-accursed Juvenal had corrupted many in Aenos, as even the pious Aenians told me of the evil, I wrote to the ruler of the city, Gatellouzos, often advising him to imprison or expel the wretch. And he expelled him without delay, and if it had not been so, the whole of Aenos would have been corrupted by him. But with him driven out, many were saved unharmed. Then, when he came here from there, I neglected no one in correcting and healing him, calling him to discussions, promising him honors from the emperor if he would abandon his error, first persuaded by just and true arguments. But he hid from me and said he neither thought nor taught anything contrary to the faith of Christians. Yet going around the monasteries, he corrupted the simpler ones by speaking against virginity and the venerable monastic habit and spouting other nonsense. Learning this, that Coronean, Lord Macarius, and Dionysius of Sardis, with my cooperation, went to the emperor and expelled the wretch from the city. I advised rather to imprison him. After some time, he returned, following this ecclesiastical confusion, and was the same, or worse. And I, calling him two or three times, said, "Man, why do you go about here and there corrupting the souls of the simple and risking being expelled again from the city by us, or suffering something worse? If you think what you teach the unlearned is true, share it with us, and we will examine it together. If you find it to be the deception of demons and demon-possessed men who taught you, you will surely benefit by returning to the truth, if you love it, as befits a man and one who partakes of reason. If I cannot resolve your doubts and persuade you, you may remain in your opinion; no one will force you. But hiding from those who know and can either help or refute you, and attaching yourself to the simple who trust you without examination, is to hate both the salvation of others and your own, and no enemy could harm you more than you harm yourself."

3.But he again hid from me and denied being what many said, going around monasteries, guesthouses, and fairs, sowing impiety, until, becoming known to many and receiving much mockery from many, and fearing he might be expelled again, he went to the then grand protosyncellus, Lord Gregory, now patriarch, pretending to hold Latin views and promising to cooperate with him and work for union, hoping thus to be sheltered by his protection and to escape his persecutors and remain without fear in the midst of Christians as an enemy of Christ.

4.Learning of this and disliking the irony against the faith more than the wretch's impurity, I sent a letter to the grand protosyncellus explaining what was necessary. And he, doing well, persuaded the emperor, already convinced by me, to expel the godless man. May the Lord be merciful to that emperor's soul, for he hated the impious and drove out impiety and strove to confirm and increase the faith of Christ by teachings and other means. For the only thing one could fault him for was this ecclesiastical confusion, and he shared in it unwillingly but willingly departed from it. Though compelled to pretend at times, he nevertheless showed by deeds and proofs to God and those who rightly paid attention what he truly was, and he alone was almost

the cause of our recovering from that defeat. But again, the impious Juvenal fled to the Peloponnese, for he knew that land was more fertile for his evil seeds, and there he rages openly against his own salvation, becoming so much more foolish than his teachers, for they sought to vindicate Hellenism by words and writings, introducing the genealogies and pure names of the gods by the poets, and elegant rites, as they say, and polities, and all those decayed and extinguished things back into life, but they did not dare to speak or write so openly and freely against the words, doctrines, works, and most pious worship of Christ, though they worked to overthrow the sacred things by which they exalt the profane and honor it. Therefore, they escape the notice of many and are honored, and being honored, they corrupt, and by those they have corrupted, they are honored, being well known. But he, having moved his unrestrained tongue against the divine, found the end of his most shameful life worthy from the pious.

5.Such men are not few among you, and we have pointed out some of them to those who have the power to restrain, dishonor, expel, or send them to the depths. But O Christ the King, your forbearance gives them more material to harm others and sow the seeds of impiety, and some of them are even given a platform to speak about sacred doctrines, daring to theologize about Christian matters, like those who impiously dance with torches before the profane with great license, their souls filled with Zeus, Apollo, Cronus, and such nonsense. And this would not be so terrible if it were not for those who know these things and allow them and wish them to happen. Who in their right mind would pay attention to such as pious? "Show me your faith by your works," it is said, and "By their fruits you will know them." Who will lament these things like Jeremiah? Who will not foresee great calamities for us from this? Or rather, who will not see, if they pay close attention, and remember many of the present evils that have already come to pass as precursors?

6.Alas, faith is gone, despised; unbelief is everywhere terrible. For some, Hellenism; for others, fatalism and atheism; for others, indifference and dimness concerning the faith, apostasy from the ancestral bounds, and altogether impiety have raged, finding a pretext in this ecclesiastical confusion. Who among such men cares about what they ought to care about? Not one, surely. They care about presiding offices, new titles, long fringes, money, power, and honors in the palace. Why did I flee the palace so hastily? Why did I shut myself in a corner and live privately, opening the door of my chamber only to a few who approach with piety, and to no others? Why have I been silent? Because it is an evil time, as the prophet says, and the prudent will keep silent. Because once I was heard when I spoke, but now I speak to those who do not listen. Because we have become wolves or leopards toward one another, slandering, envying, accusing, fabricating lies, killing, if we think we will escape notice. And whence does this come? From indifference to the faith. And whence does this come? From the silencing of the word of God, from the worst of all famines, the famine of the word, which God brings upon the cities that provoke Him as the ultimate plague. "How will they believe," it is said, "if they do not understand, and how will they understand if they do not hear?"

7.From this, it is clear that our end is near. For in the last days, as the blessed Paul writes to Timothy, there will be terrible times: people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness but denying its power. Avoid such people," he says. The priesthood is cheap; the high priesthood is simoniacal; every ecclesiastical affair is bought with money; the gifts of the Spirit are

weighed out from the treasures of Mammon; holy houses are sold; things consecrated to God are traded. O the bold sacrilege of those who buy and sell them! And could we not have been abandoned by God for doing these things or tolerating them? And what is this abandonment? We have cast off godliness. How? We have no Church. The doctrines of the fathers are ignored, despised; we exchange them for the fear of hopes, the promise of gifts. This is happening in Italy, and from there until now; we have given what is holy to dogs and pearls to swine. Among Jews and Saracens, the common people, those attached to worldly affairs, do not dare to speak against the knowledgeable and those appointed over sacred things; but among us, Christians, those who have no right to do so lead and carry the affairs of the faith. Among them, no one dares to speak against the ancestral faith or praise unbelief or another faith before it, or they are stoned and burned. But among us, we shamelessly harangue in the marketplace against the fathers and their faith, and who are we? Some artisans, uncultured, sorcerers, unworthy even once to speak about divine things, and instead of crucifying those who dare such things, they are praised; while those who know and are able to speak reverently about divine things and consider frankness for the truth the only happiness and luxury, and are indignant about these terrible things, are persecuted as criminals and harmful to the common good. Be merciful, O Lord, to this remnant of orthodox Christians. Do not abandon us, but correct us as You know best, and have mercy on me, a sinner and unworthy servant.

8.But to dramatize these things would require many words. You, however, most pious Manuel, have gladdened us by what you have done against the impious Juvenal, and in such evils, we have been allowed to breathe a little by the report of your excellent deed. For you have removed a plague from the council, cut off the reproach of our faith and our race; you have saved those who would have been harmed by him if his wicked life had continued longer; you have benefited even those who have been harmed, if they wish to come to their senses late and understand what is necessary. For they can reflect on that most pitiable life and the most dishonorable death, fittingly and consistently with his wicked purpose and twisted doctrines.

9.For what was noble or graceful about him that would make him persuasive to anyone of sound mind? He had no wisdom but was utterly ignorant of lofty and divine matters. He differed only slightly from the most unlearned, in that he was moderately trained to speak and write, but his soul was very coarse and utterly unacquainted with and deaf to all philosophy. What could be more vulgar than his conduct, for which he was not even deemed worthy of the priesthood? This, indeed, drove him mad against the faith. He was a glutton, a drunkard, a jester, intemperate, a buffoon, unstable. First, he was a Christian, then he became a Jew, then he consorted with the followers of Mohammed, then a fatalist, then an accuser of Christians—this, indeed, the pinnacle of his wickedness and the crown of his evils. But he was not wise, nor holy, but prudent. And who would say this without being mad? What sign of prudence did he show throughout his life? Was he not a bandit chief on the Holy Mountain, plotting great evils against the monks there? Was he not a murderer of monks who had done no wrong, for which he was finally captured by the Athonites and held in chains for some time, then released when they showed him mercy? Did he not intend to do the same in the Peloponnese and beyond in the time of the blessed Theodore Porphyrogenitus? Did he not do the work of priests in Apulia and Albania, being unholy and barely escaping like pitch? Was he not caught everywhere in the worst acts? Did he not gather gold by every means, while he himself lived in hunger or begging? For the demons he served foretold to him a kingdom and such things, and for this, he gathered money while hungry; but to trust in such things for such small sums—what folly was this? Did he not say he was the bastard of Emperor

Andronicus, greatly honoring his mother? Did he not, taking a monastery here, that of the Archistrategos, dig up the graves of the dead there and carry out the bones, some of which he committed to fire by night, others he threw wherever he happened to be, only to remove the remains of the tombs and sell the iron and to find some gold, as he thought, buried with those dead?

10.Who is unaware of this, who does not know it? And is this the work of a prudent and pious man, or one who seems to have some faith, or of a foolish and impious and beastly man? Such are his disciples and teachers. Being such, they escape the notice of many, but God and the prudent and pious are not unaware of them.

11.Therefore, his end was fitting to his life. The fool wished perhaps to become a martyr for falsehood, and hating that miserable life, worthy of his purpose, he thought to lay it down gloriously for his friends, because he died for glory and in madness, because he paid the penalty for the murder he dared against the monks, who had done no wrong. For our Teacher and God, against whom he blasphemed, He it was who said, "He who lives by the sword will die by the sword," and "With the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

12.But as I said, you have benefited those who can consider all these things, bringing upon him an end worthy of his impious life, and you have filled the lack of others, who, seeing that insolent man against the faith, did not tear him apart. You have frightened his like, lest they too fall into pious hands, as he did into yours. You have also made those who can prevent such things and have not done so until now appear more prudent in such matters. And from them, we will now more fervently demand similar zeal, and perhaps, out of shame, they will more warmly oversee the affairs of Christ, and will not be so cold in avenging our salvation and the faith. For as long as they are such, they provoke the divine Spirit and tear our consciences. You have punished a hand boldly raised against the Creator; you have cut off a tongue madly raving against God, ears that had turned away from the divine words. God had also punished him before with worms, whose foul and putrid corpse you would find, but neither before was he turned to divine justice, being utterly mad, nor was he sobered by human punishments afterward. Truly, having despaired of both lives, and seeming to win glory for himself by martyrdom and keeping the law of Christ in his struggles against Christ, and trampling the laws of the Greeks in his contests for Greek doctrines, thus the fool was not even consistent with his own impiety.

13.But as I said, you have benefited those who can consider all these things, bringing upon him an end worthy of his impious life, and you have filled the lack of others, who, seeing that insolent man against the faith, did not tear him apart. You have frightened his like, lest they too fall into pious hands, as he did into yours. You have also made those who can prevent such things and have not done so until now appear more prudent in such matters. And from them, we will now more fervently demand similar zeal, and perhaps, out of shame, they will more warmly oversee the affairs of Christ, and will not be so cold in avenging our salvation and the faith. For as long as they are such, they provoke the divine Spirit and tear our consciences. You have punished a hand boldly raised against the Creator; you have cut off a tongue madly raving against God, ears that had turned away from the divine words. God had also punished him before with worms, whose foul and putrid corpse you would find, but neither before was he turned to divine justice, being utterly mad, nor was he sobered by human punishments afterward. Truly, having despaired of both lives, and seeming to win glory for himself by martyrdom and keeping the law of Christ in his struggles against Christ,

and trampling the laws of the Greeks in his contests for Greek doctrines, thus the fool was not even consistent with his own impiety.

14.Rejoice, then, as I said at the beginning, soldier of Christ and avenger of His glory. I kiss your mouth, which pronounced the sentence against that impure tongue; I kiss your soul before your tongue, which conceived the Christian defense of Christ against the Christ-hater. I would have kissed your hands too, if you had dealt with the impious man with your own hands. O blessed hands, which dragged that foul remnant of a man to the sea and gave him to the depths, rejoicing, imitating the zeal of the best ruler. But he, they say, as he was dragged and drowned, sent up glory to the First Cause. Well did he glorify the First Cause of all, who allowed no impiety or nonsense against Him. Glory, then, to the First Cause of all from us, for not overlooking the impious man in his ingratitude and insults against Him and His excellent providence and laws, as He wonderfully improved rational nature, turning the simple away from faith in Him and drawing them to the precipices of polytheism and the terrible deception of demons, but He exacted justice even here from the insolent man, as a forerunner of the punishments to come and as a prophet.

15.Forgive me, O man of God, for not weaving your praise worthily of your virtue. Now I would have used timely and rhetorical methods and words of wisdom to show the excellence of your achievement for Christ, but my monastic habit prevents me. Therefore, I write to you in a more monastic and private manner. For all external things are now neglected by us, and we look only to one thing: piety and lamenting for our sins and begging God for mercy. And it is great love for you and your excellent deed that has persuaded me to write, along with another reason, which I will now state. Ignorance and envy against good men and their good works are stirred up everywhere. It is likely, therefore, that even your most pious deed will be slandered by some. I pass over those who accuse out of ignorance and inexperience of good things or out of impiety like his, but some, perhaps thinking your zeal a reproach of their own coldness in the faith, will charge your deed with rashness. Therefore, so that your zeal for Christ may not be dulled by hearing these things, or you may falter as if under accusation from their poor judgment, but rather be strengthened in the opinion of the prudent and pious—and there are many there who praise you, as I think—this is why I was especially moved to write to you. I give you my opinion, which I have from God; for it is God's and His elect saints', though I, His unworthy servant, become a messenger and bearer of it to you. Let others babble, whoever they are, whether out of ignorance or for any other reason. There are some of the pulpit who do not agree with this opinion. Do not concern yourself with them; "for they are blind guides of the blind," and the Church pities them more, because worldly men lead them into the kingdom, and they are not ashamed. They ought to emulate such men, but they, weighed down by deep sleep, even blame the watchful, and some of them have truly fallen under the same judgment as Juvenal, though not in the same way; for through indifference to the faith, the Church is wronged and dishonored, and they do not care for the faith of Christ, but flatter and laugh with those who dishonor it, so that some good may come to them from them in time. But you, taking and embracing this opinion, do not concern yourself with them. If a human, not divine, reasoning moved you to that man's killing, and another purpose, not zeal for the faith or hatred of his unbelief and love for Christ and the mysteries of the faith, against which he raged, nor care for the salvation of your brothers, then the matter has some blame for you. And though you pleased God by removing the impious man from the midst, against whom he was impious, yet because the good of the purpose happened to you apart from the purpose, you owe an account to God, and you must be cleansed and broken by works of repentance defined

for the purpose, apart from which you rushed to kill the impious. For every judge and lawgiver judges and ordains justice according to the purpose, and God especially, who searches the hearts of men and sees the purposes without examination. I do not say that if those who carried out the punishment of the impious man received some good from his wealth, which he gathered evilly and kept worse, this would harm them. For if he was punished for his impiety, and this followed accordingly—for it was necessary, after his killing, that his wealth be distributed to some—this does no harm to those who distributed it. Yet I would have advised you to gain nothing from such things, but to leave them to the other servants or the public treasury, not because of any sin of yours toward them—for there is none, as I have said—but so that the good you did for Christ may not be soiled by those who do not know how to judge rightly, and so that your life may not benefit even incidentally from the impious man, and so that you may receive the reward for your boldness for Christ from Christ alone, without any temporary benefit coming to you from it. I do not say this because I have heard someone say such a thing, but because I give you the rule of truth from all sides and apply the right judgment of our—or rather, according to the saints—judgment to all possible circumstances of the matter.

16.If, therefore, you carried out that sentence primarily and deliberately for gain, or revenge, or any human passion, you owe some apology and cleansing for this purpose. But if primarily and deliberately the zeal of the faith moved your pious soul against that foul life, as we are persuaded—for what did you have against him living, or what good did you hope for from his death, or who would say that sending the executioners against him was not rather taking pity on the daily slaughter of others and caring for the souls killed by him?

17.Therefore, to sum up, if you punished that thrice-wretched man as a destroyer for the glory of Christ, and whoever shared in the sentence, this sin is upon me and my head, and you are not only clean, but worthy of many rewards. Your family will be honored on earth and distinguished in heaven for this pious sentence. Truly, O Manuel, you did not overlook Emmanuel, dishonored by those who should not have. Truly God is with you, who moved you to His zeal. Truly in our days you have shown yourself a true Christian, the good Manuel. We have seen in these cold days your piety and zeal, the counterpart to the impiety of Juvenal, than which nothing was more impious. If we all put on your zeal for the faith, the mystery of Christ would not be shaken in the Peloponnese and here by foolish and vile little men.

18.This is the conclusion of my discernment. But consider also the testimony of the Spirit, and let everyone who knows and believes rightly consider. One thing is a heretic, another an unbeliever, and another an apostate from the faith. An unbeliever is one who does not wish to be united to Christ at all, like the Jews and Greeks; a heretic is one who is united to Christ but corrupts His doctrines, whether he does this primarily or secondarily, and whether concerning theology or economy. For every doctrine opposed to an article of faith, whether directly or indirectly, and whether concerning theology or economy, is heretical, and everyone who holds such a doctrine is a heretic; an apostate is one who has been united to all the articles of faith, then departed from it, of whom it is said in the proverbs, "A man who is apostate is a useless man," for he is like a dead man; or he received faith, having lost the cause of eternal life in those who believe.

19.The Church of Christ does not permit rulers to punish unbelievers who have not yet received the faith. "For what have I to do with judging those outside?" says the divine Apostle in his letter to the Corinthians. But concerning heretics, it is written to Timothy, "A heretic, after a first and second admonition, reject, knowing that such a person is warped." The Church does something like this because of its great

gentleness and pity for the conversion of the erring; it admonishes heretics once and twice, and seeing them persist, despairing of their conversion, it then cares for the salvation of others, and pronouncing a sentence of excommunication, it separates them from the pious, so that no one approaching them may be harmed. But separated from the Church and enduring separation, since they are incurably sick, if they keep their twisted doctrines to themselves alone, they remain unharmed by worldly rulers, like unbelievers. But if they sow strife and fight for their doctrines, it is necessary for worldly rulers to threaten, restrain, and do such things to them, so that they may not harm others. But since the apostate from the faith surpasses both heretics and unbelievers by a great interval—"For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing it, to turn back," says the blessed Peter to them—the Church does not permit worldly rulers to punish them openly. But if rulers do this, moved by zeal for the faith and securing safety for the Church, the Church accepts and crowns them; for it is not the same to command and to praise, but the Church praises many things done and would wish them to be done so; it does not command them openly. For example, it does not command the killing of those who counterfeit money, nor, if a ruler, having caught such a one, asked the Church what should be done to him, would the Church say the man should be killed; but if the ruler, having caught him, crucified or mutilated him according to the laws laid down and enforced everywhere, the Church would not be angry with the ruler, but would rather praise him, and would blame him if he let him go. How much worse is he who corrupts the faith, through which salvation comes to the souls of men, than he who counterfeits money, through which we are helped in this temporary life? Therefore, as rulers who have the sword from God must punish other evildoers with the ultimate penalties, so much more must they punish apostates from the faith.

20.Such was the lamented Juvenal; for contrary to the covenants he made with his mother the Church when he was baptized, he turned to Greek superstition. Then he spoke and wrote against the faith. Then he devised every evil in his heart, only to separate those around him from the faith. Then he did not use arguments and proofs—for he neither had them nor was such a man—but with shamelessness, blasphemies, and insults against his own head, through which he was no longer tolerable.

21.Who, then, would dare to charge the punisher of such a man with murder, unless he were either an enemy of the salvation of Christians, or otherwise childish and a babbler, or rather, how were not those who until now allowed him to live murderers of Christian souls?

22.Hear also what the imperial decrees say: "Those who have been deemed worthy of holy baptism and again Hellenize are subject to the ultimate punishment," and, "If a Jew dares," it says, "to pervert a Christian thought, he is subject to capital punishment." How much more worthy of condemnation is he who, after baptism and faith, not only Hellenizes himself but also perverts Christian thoughts with words and writings and all manner of nonsense with fierce madness against the honorable? And I pass over the many laws concerning Manichaeans, Donatists, and Hellenists. Does the Church, then, consider it terrible for these laws to be kept, or does it exact penalties from those who wish to keep them? And how could it? For first, those who made these laws would not have made them unless they agreed with the Church; second, how could the Church, as if they were sinning, regulate those who fight alongside it and legislate and act for it? But if the Church does not do this with its own hands, it is for this reason that worldly rulers were appointed to be its avengers, so that they may do for the Church what it is not fitting for it to do by itself. And the emperor swears to avenge the doctrines of the Church, promising it a reward for its proclamation; the governors sent

to the cities swear to keep the imperial decrees; and the decrees say what we have heard. Therefore, all things agree with the purpose of the Church through all things, even if it is not expressly said so by it.

23.You, then, O most noble and pious of men and rulers, following my advice, give thanks to Christ for what has happened; for many crowns are woven for you from there; but if you truly find another man sick with the same things as Juvenal, turning those who associate with him away from the true faith and drawing them to the deception of demons, which God abolished through Himself and that excellent economy, after a second and third admonition, beat him, imprison him, then cut out his tongue, then cut off his hand, and if he remains evil, send him to the depths of the sea. I say after a second and third admonition, "lest perhaps God grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil." This is likely to happen to many, though it was impossible for Juvenal ever to repent. For his shameless and vulgar madness against piety was the acknowledged frenzy and madness of demons, who, finding him light and inclined to error through ignorance and wickedness, drove him mad and made him rage against his own salvation. Therefore, though he was often admonished by many not just twice or thrice, he was to be rejected by the Church as warped, and subject to the ultimate punishments by worldly rulers, though neither the Church nor the rulers did all that was necessary, but with the sword of the cursed they killed men, alas, neglecting souls.

24.And your deed is such; but I forewarn all rulers, greater and lesser, that if they do not punish these Hellenists, if they see Hellenism advancing and tolerate it and do not make the necessary examination, so that these things may be corrected sooner, either they are Greeks themselves and try to hide, or they will be judged by God and men as Greeks. For the evil, how great it is, escapes no one here and among us, and who are its sowers and who receive it. Therefore, if the rulers among you and among us do not join together and use the Church as a helper, or rather, make the Church first, so that they may use it as a helper—for from the ecclesiastical confusion these terrible things have happened—and do all that is necessary, along with piety, all our most honorable things will perish, and kingdom, freedom, laws, and customs, and all our things will soon be turned upside down. And I am blameless henceforth, having often spoken and testified about these things both privately and publicly; but those who pierce Christ or side with those who pierce Christ will see whom they pierce both here and there, and will pay the penalty for all the terrible things that will happen here.

TO AN UNKNOWN PERSON

III. To an Unknown Person (before 1453).

†…….

1.We were once delighted when reports of your piety reached us, and not only because you had chosen the best portion for yourself, but also because you desired to secure it for many others. For since rumor travels easily everywhere, nothing that happened on the island escaped our notice. Hence, no one needed to recount to us the good things occurring on the island, nor to add that you were devout and had become diligent in all good things. We therefore hoped that because of these things, you would stand more firmly against the temptations that arise, and that you would imitate the house built upon the rock, which remains unshaken against the onslaught of waters and winds, and safely grants life to those who take refuge in it. Thus, your house too would have remained steadfast if you had endured the struggle against your adversaries even unto death, and you would have become an immortal pillar of endurance for all time, saving and persuading many by your example to live soberly. For what is more honorable than death, when one chooses it for the sake of truth? And what is more wretched than life, when it is obtained through the betrayal of truth? For even with so many examples before us—examples we hear sung about daily—and with our conscience urging us inwardly to emulate their zeal, and with this temporary life offering nothing stable or secure, how does it not surpass all wretchedness to cowardly betray the confession of truth and to despise that courage which the divine Scriptures daily sow within us? Did not almost all the martyrs we honor have wives, children, and abundant possessions? Was not life sweet to them all? And even to those who had nothing else, at least they beheld this sun with pleasure, and for that reason, they naturally hesitated to face death, since the desire for being and living is ingrained in all. Yet they knew that manifold rewards awaited them in the future life in exchange for what they surrendered here, and that our Master would one day test us to see what kind of people we would prove to be in the trials for the sake of truth. For He will meet those who confess Him here, and He will reject those who deny Him, sending away as enemies those who, out of shame or fear, conceal the truth here.

2.Knowing all this very well, we hoped that when the time came, you would courageously undergo the testimony of truth and would choose to die defending what you had once acknowledged. For it is not surprising that those who are wavering in their faith would shrink from death for what they do not firmly believe, considering it harsh to give up the apparent pleasures of life. But for one who has believed without doubt, nothing should prevent them from dying except the dangerous choice of preferring the worst over the best. And yet, many have been deemed worthy of the rewards of martyrdom by their willingness to die, though God, in His providence, sometimes spared them from dying in torment. This too you ought to have expected, leaving the outcome to the will of God.

3.Oh, how many praises would now be your due! How many would celebrate your death, clearly brought upon you by your bold confession of Christ! How much zeal would you have inspired in the souls of those who saw and heard you, and how many would you have guided toward the heavenly life, as if placing before their eyes the songs about the steadfastness of the holy martyrs and renewing that lofty and divine path which the unbelief of the many, as sin increased, has made untrodden and difficult. For do not think that the rewards for those who struggle for a single truth are less than those who contend for the whole faith. Just as

the one who transgresses a single commandment is the least, so too it is impossible for those who abandon a single truth to attain the blessedness that the knowledge of truth brings. And the words of the teachers persuade us that those who are persecuted for the sake of right doctrine by those who seem pious have a greater reward than those who resist the impious.

4.But you, alas, have become a deserter beyond all expectation, and though you initially took up the boldness and zeal of the champions, and held the crowns in your hands, you let them slip away through negligence, and now instead of rewards, you seek forgiveness. This has caused us great discouragement; this makes us fear greatly for the others. "Let the pine tree wail, for the cedar has fallen." And what hope can we have for the weaker, when even your firmness was so violently overcome by the love of life? But may all remain steadfast by the grace of God, and you, take courage, and do not despair of salvation. For even if you have missed the crowns of martyrdom, though they were almost visibly placed upon your head, yet if you are freed from the harm of your fall by fleeing to Him who can heal all things, you will find mercy. For no sin committed by humans against God remains incurable when brought genuinely to His healing power. Indeed, such falls have often been permitted by providence to become occasions for greater fervor in piety. And so, forgiveness will certainly be granted to you if you flee to Him. The genuine beginning of repentance will be the renunciation and avoidance of what you once rashly promised, which you can do without danger. For if you choose the private life for a time and postpone your service until the Church attains the hoped-for stability, no one will demand the fulfillment of your promises or exact penalties for not keeping them. For we see the peace of the Church near at hand, unless we are to be utterly forsaken by God. And if your conscience prompts you in some other way to seek God's forgiveness, do what seems right. Only ensure that these things are done lawfully, and guard this one thing above all: do not utterly despair, lest you be severed from our wholeness. †

TO THE GRAND DUKE LOUKAS NOTARAS

IV. To the Grand Duke Loukas Notaras (1451-1452).

† To the most magnificent, most noble, most praiseworthy, and unique pillar of our race, the Grand Duke, my lord, may you prosper in the Lord. The least among us, Gennadius, wishes you salvation of soul and all prosperity.

1.What should I mention first, what last, and what in between, when recounting the good things written in your illustrious letter? Should I express gratitude for the kind words spoken out of goodwill, or marvel at how fittingly such things were dictated to you from the heart? Or should I ask forgiveness if we do not follow your excellent advice, not out of stubbornness but because we are compelled by forceful reasoning? Since it was necessary to respond quickly to those excellent points in your embassy's letter, we could not even attempt such a task. Therefore, those matters will be praised by us at another time, and the most beautiful and precious document you sent will remain with us, accruing interest daily until we repay our debt to you. As for the letters written to those rulers whom the wretched fate of the Greeks has made so fearsome and necessary to us, I was overjoyed to see them, and I marveled at the nature and resolve of my dearest friend, considering them beyond all praise. One could scarcely add anything to them unless coming from a more divine school of thought and communion with the higher. As for my own contribution, it is sincerely human and rooted in this worldly life until very recently, so far removed from your wisdom and experience that I seem more unskilled than those entirely unaccustomed to such matters. Thus, adapting the words of Theocritus, I might say, "What you omitted is what you did best." For we affirm that what you left unsaid is what did not need to be said.

2.But send your letters confidently, most prudent of men, under God's guidance, who daily moves your mind and will toward what benefits our race. For this purpose, He has prepared you in every way to meet the need, so that you alone suffice, intending what others may not even dare to teach, accomplishing what is difficult even to conceive for those who pride themselves on discernment, laboring in ways that even those in official positions might hesitate to undertake, and in times of financial scarcity, opening your private treasures to the city as if it were a public treasury. Your deeds, sung everywhere, bring honor to the city, not only surpassing the achievements of the present but also rivaling the most celebrated acts of the past. If you count us among the witnesses of your deeds in critical moments, as you said, this will surely be a mark of your kindness. From us, you will receive nothing but praise and admiration. We will rejoice in your zeal for the common good, praying that you may continue to do such things for it and that it may enjoy such blessings from you, even as we pray for our own salvation. Let the arrows of envy not trouble you at all, for they are the blows of children, unable to dim your light but rather brightening it. For you alone are above envy, and those who dare to criticize your works reveal their malice rather than envy. No one can rival you in the good things you possess, nor do you seize the work of the common good for yourself. Rather, even when you often desired to remain at rest, the affairs of state, like a soul abandoned, forced themselves upon you with clamor. And you yield to these matters, as we all entreat you for the sake of our salvation, and above all, to God who commands you, from whom you hope to receive the rewards of your care for our race. For what you seem to receive from our race as a reward for your virtue is, in fact, a grace bestowed upon it by you.

TO THE GRAND DUKE LOUKAS NOTARAS

3.Live, then, our ornament and common pride, and pray for us, that we may spend the rest of our lives in private pursuits, which we have chosen with God after those fruitless tumults, not seeking to benefit others or wishing to harm ourselves, but striving to become better in our relationship with God, though we will scarcely achieve this, relying on the poverty of Christ, whose hand sustains us.
Repentance, most illustrious lord.

TO THE SAME

V. To the Same (1451-1452).

† To the same Grand Duke, from the same.

1.The letter I promised to send you, even without your asking, will be sent, and you will be greatly pleased to receive it, as it is entirely devoted to the divine, about which you speak most often and for which you will receive much praise on earth and even greater reward in heaven. But now you have provoked us with your most excellent letters to respond, for we could not pass over in silence the grace and wisdom that shine in them. For Hesiod says that the wise man is one who knows much by nature. You, however, surpass by nature even those who pride themselves on their skill, and you have made your nature even brighter through education, so that whether speaking or writing, you would be esteemed by few in gatherings of the learned, while many who seem superior in precise expression would be far surpassed by you in the depth of thought. If there were a contest in true rhetoric or in the affairs of state, all who have a share in such matters would immediately fall behind you. I am not surprised by this, great as it is, but rather that, with so much to do, you have chosen to devote yourself to the study of words, yet you appear no less active in deeds nor less sharp in speech despite your many labors, thus exposing us, who have spent our lives in words, as less gifted. For we do not strive to know more than others, but rather to draw near to those engaged in practical affairs, and we consider this a defeat for us. For this reason, we would have been deeply envious if we were judged by the same standard.

2.Now we consider your virtue to be your own happiness, and we would have prayed to become wiser than you, if it were possible. For if those devoted to learning should hope for any good from you, when would you please them more than by sharing in their finest pursuits, even surpassing them? Or if we are to be saved by reason, we would pray that you, who are engaged in practical affairs, surpass your subjects in wisdom, so that you may better know how to save them. But if you alone, among those who govern, have become a devotee of learning, you steer our ship with reason, even in such a storm, and if we have anything to offer, you recognize it well, while others, as they say, do not even cast a glance. Should we resent your zeal for learning, or should we consider it a common blessing and an ornament to our homeland, especially when someone from elsewhere admires your education and departs in wonder? And how much you benefit the common good and us, who would otherwise live among barbarians, if you, sent by God, were not able to give and receive reason, and to know well how much the learned differ from the unlearned, especially in a city that must be saved by men raised on books and reason with wisdom.

3.I know that some have increased their innate wickedness through the power of words, while others, through great irrationality, have brought no less harm to their companions than the evils of a shipwreck, and still others have adorned their natural ugliness with the beauty of words. But you, best of men, even before devoting yourself to books, were already perfect in nature, younger than many, yet second to none in counsel, generalship, and diplomacy, surpassing all in the exercises proper to those trained for greater things, even with less effort than those who labored alongside you. As time went on, your virtues grew not in number (for they were all present in you from the beginning), but in greatness and beauty, overshadowing even the best of our time, and now that they are gone, you shine almost alone in the governance of the city, so that these things seem to belong to you and to our most noble emperor, and before him to his brother, while others seem to

follow your lead, unable to devise anything better than what you propose, nor even attempting to do so. For they have once and for all conceded to themselves that they are inferior to you, even if they seem to surpass others, as is likely. I do not say this to blame others, for that would not be praise for you, but to show that you are far better.

4.Since you also sought the adornment of learning (for this was lacking in the greatness of your nature), in a short time you gathered the finest things, either by delving into books or by paying attention while others read, whom your virtue's reverence, and for some, their need, brought daily to your house. And now, if you seek what is beneficial, you arrange and sharpen your words about yourself, as if one coming from the exercises of Athens or any other school of learning, so that anyone hearing you would immediately say that the best of the ancients has flowed into your soul. For what wise thought or memorable deed of those who once ruled any part of the earth well does not fittingly adorn your speech when remembered? Others also attempt this, but they resemble those who try to weave a rope from wood and flax, so poorly do their recollections fit the need. But when you speak, anyone would say that your words were never intended for any other purpose, nor could any other example be added to them.

5.As for the sacred doctrines, I do not yet wish to praise you purely, for fear that, having seized this judgment, you might become burdensome to us, often bringing forward that saying, that the pope must be proclaimed among us, rightly dividing the word of truth, whenever we act piously toward God, and that we must be orthodox in this way, even though we clearly believe the opposite of the pope, nor can we believe otherwise. We have even cautiously avoided Gabriel's admonitions from heaven, as if he were using persuasion in vain. For if these things could coexist, it would be a riddle beyond all riddles.

6.Therefore, we do not wish, when you attempt again to persuade us on these matters, to resist more gently, as if strengthened by the judgment we now give you on doctrines. If this were not necessary, I would have surrendered to you most of our leaders, who would be persuaded of whatever you wished. For being unable to argue, and at the same time frightened by shadows instead of realities, they would concede everything. Under your influence, even when I was present, you often strove to persuade the poor of what you yourself had not yet been persuaded, and then to change their minds again to the opposite. For you did not wish falsehood to prevail then, but were exposing human nature. At first, I was deeply troubled and argued against you, but when I realized it was a diversion, I listened with both annoyance and pleasure. I do not fear that you will ever willingly deceive these men, but rather that you yourself might be carried away, knowing how much better those things are, yet considering some necessity stronger than truth, as many do, and judging it preferable to seek immediate relief rather than the rewards laid up for those who believe and act rightly, hoping to secure for us some deliverance from human fears, while God is provoked, and thus wishing to persuade others of what you yourself must first be persuaded, yielding to the greater necessity, acting rightly but judging wrongly.

7.Therefore, when you, leaving all that aside, secure for us the freedom of our fathers, and let the Latins argue and persuade us, if they can, with the truth (which they will never be able to do as long as they wish to persuade us of what does not exist and cannot exist), then we will render you the fitting judgment. As for the rest of your skill in words, anyone speaking confidently and saying more than has been said on these matters will not miss the truth.

TO THE SAME

8.I will next explain in what way you have appeared brighter than the flowers of eloquence. There is a liberality, which, if one were to call it distinguished above all who have ever been so called, would not wrong them, but would ascribe to you the finest of distinctions. For while each of those praised excelled in one thing, you, surpassing each in every respect, cannot be known more for one thing than another, and thus it has become your distinction to be adorned beyond all others.

9.Having previously spoken of your prudence, I now pass over it, for it would be impossible for those things to come together in your soul without the utmost prudence. Nor do I speak of your temperance, which all know you possess far more than those who promise and keep it, using the rule of reason most precisely in both pleasures and pains. But your courage, magnanimity, justice, foresight, harmony with friends, kindness to strangers, and compassion—all these, if one wishes to see them clearly, will be found in you. For each of these is perfectly formed and refined, as if you had directed your life toward one of them alone, which happens to most who, having cultivated one virtue, are content if they show even a faint image of a second. But your zeal for the common salvation of all, demonstrated not without great danger (for the account of your expenses is less important), is beyond the capacity of our times to bear or of our words to praise, for our age has brought a strange burden, exposing as impossible the attempts of those who would imitate your deeds or praise them in words.

10.But these things have been mentioned incidentally now, though they are of daily use to us and to all. The subject of our present writing, however, is the matter of those letters. Do not trouble yourself to send us food from either place, for if, as you said, the burden of food interferes with the activity of the mind, both kinds will harm us equally, the one by the quality of the food troubling us, the other by its quantity causing harm. For it is not easy to partake of them with moderation, since their pleasant taste makes them seem easy to consume, and when they are sent in abundance, we can scarcely rise from the table satisfied. Rather, you do not trouble yourself at all, for earth and sea, by God's providence, send you abundant provisions, as a small recompense for your vigilance on their behalf. We, however, neglect these things as they pertain to us, being more concerned with how we may enjoy your gifts. Instead, we ought to have a simple and modest table, no richer than that of those who live daily in the fields, though they labor much and might therefore enjoy finer food, while we, who live an idle life, are forbidden by the law of Paul even to eat at all.

11.Therefore, do not wish to send us such things, but when we are in need of necessities, we will come to your house ourselves, as you have often helped us in our needs, like a daily altar of mercy to many. If you wish to show the multitude how much you love and honor us, they can discern this from many things, if they wish. For you neglect nothing that is truly great. Yet even these things, being a demonstration of your virtue, we allow to happen. Otherwise, having once broken away from human honors, we wish to live our lives without them. As for the praises with which you praise us, we are pleased to hear them, but we are troubled when words are applied to deeds. For either you grant us these things out of goodwill, while we are devoid of all good and a vain burden on this earth, or you wrong yourselves by overlooking such things. Therefore, we would rightly share your grief. But you would care for us more appropriately, not by sending delicacies, pickled fish, or public provisions, nor by granting us some office full of noise and little else, but by addressing the matters for which we were born and have come, as it is said. These are to rebuke those who sin, to dispel unbelief, which has terribly intoxicated the souls of men, and to lead those who can follow from darkness and shadow to the truly human and Christian life by reason; to show all stewards, whether of affairs or of

faith, what they must do to govern better and how to save the most noble soul of the great emperor with words of truth, not with shameful flattery that corrupts, and to you, the finest of his instruments, not by seeking chains and collars, but by running to you with paternal frankness, speaking something that may provoke anger and bite deeply. For you are not entirely without fault, and your small failing becomes a ruin to the whole. Awaken the entire city, which sleeps deeply and does not perceive the approaching danger, not by purchasing deliverance with bodies, wealth, and every means, as those who are prudent everywhere do, but by trusting in shadows and foreign myths for salvation, the most useful of which is the hope derived from papal funds after the betrayal of truth, or the belief that by seeming still united with the Latins, they will remain unassailable by enemies, and other such small-mindedness and distrust, while the heavenly aid is driven away with both hands, without which we cannot be saved even with the greatest resources. Advise, persuade, and compel all to change to the character of true polity, for now we differ not at all from the cities in tents, unless we are even worse, since no danger accompanies our illusions. For if one were to extend the eyes of the soul to all the affairs of the city, they would see that it is not so much weak from lack of resources as from negligence and confusion, and even if it were saved for a long time, it would have nothing noble, but would stumble in deep darkness, colliding and entangling itself at random, with no trace of its former bloom, unable to delight a soul that knows and can delight in virtue and the beauty of souls and some trace of polity preserving what is sung or what is now praised.

12.For these things, I wished you to use me (for I pass over the rest), seeing the sickness and guiding with words and assisting with deeds. For perhaps after such effort, things would have gone better. But the time in the former state found us most idle, even if we sometimes secretly or forcefully benefited the common good, with almost no one noticing or approving. Now, however, hindered by our state, perhaps you will not even be able to use us if you wish. For we must be with others, enslaved to other matters and another master, since even the care of the monastery, which we initially accepted, moved by more divine reasoning, now, as those who gave it and earnestly desired it do not entirely agree with our aims, we have received this heavenly signal that we must rather attend to private matters and strive to purify and elevate the soul by the unerring illuminations from God and the guidance of those ancient ones, and we have blamelessly avoided that small frankness. You will give an account and resolve the confusion of our Church, bringing down to us at least some image of that former good order, perhaps to be perfected gradually with effort and time, while some corner hides us, attending to God and reason in the midst of the homeland, caring nothing for foreign adornment. For what God has given us, as He willed, is more precious than even the kingdom itself, if we must believe Solomon, who judged so well concerning both, being both wise and a king. But if we are to provoke God further, soon holy Athos will receive me. There are others among us who, cooperating in the neglect of divine things, will surely enjoy with you what comes from there. These things I have already said to the most noble emperor. May God grant us both a bellows and a furnace, that is, to take hold of His and all affairs, making him the greatest emperor and you after him, so that we do not labor in vain and seem still to be mad, or, worse, are slandered with firm hopes of heavenly mercy, while those who cannot face reproof or correction turn to slander.

TO AN UNKNOWN PERSON

VI. To an Unknown Person (1452).

From the same Gennadius.

1.Another has said that we ought to be grateful to you for writing to all our relatives and friends and for always remembering us. For we would not seem to you to be making our presence a mere addition to your letters out of goodwill toward others, nor would we seem to be always present in your soul, as if engraved there, since you remember us everywhere. For we would not write to them without some reverence. But I say that we owe you much greater thanks for your virtue. For I would wish, if anyone, that you too be among the best, and I would have paid a high price for your goodwill toward your father and other relatives, all of whom have turned out well, thinking that you would enjoy some benefit from it. And yet, if it were necessary for all to resemble their parents, this would not be to your credit. But since many, by choice, become unlike their nature, we owe thanks not so much to nature as to your choice, which preserves the precise characteristics of our race. This is greater, as even in unequal fortune with your parents and ancestors, you preserve the nobility of nature, but in the opportunities of life, examined in noble ways, yet judged by the many as far inferior to what one from such a lineage ought to have. And that you have such helpers in words, both in your parents and in yourself, is clear, and no one could deny it. Many, indeed, even with such power, chose a life unworthy not only of their lineage but also of the best pursuits, and therefore your praise for virtue must be attributed more to your judgment than to the words you practice. Knowing this gratitude especially, I rejoice for you and for myself, and I consider, concerning what has been said, that not only our relatives and us, whom you delight no less than them by being such, but also the homeland itself gains some glory, so that even for this alone we would owe you thanks, adding to your virtue, even if there is much hope. But know that we, considering this most of all, are moved to praise you now, not fearing that you will grow dull, as many do, thinking praise the end and, having received it from anyone, they cease their labors for good things.

2.I also love those on the island and owe them great thanks, for they do not envy you your praises. Otherwise, how would we know these things about you, unless they proclaimed them? And you, I think, would owe them just thanks, not only for their other kindness but also for the praises with which they repay you. But I set apart the holy Paisios, who would suffice in place of thousands, even if many testified against me, being most trustworthy for many just reasons. For a divine man, knowing to attend to naked virtue, cannot err in judgment out of goodwill, whatever men he may associate with. Therefore, what he said about your thoughts on the philosophy of Christ, let it be dedicated rather to Jesus Himself, to persuade you even more not only to love them but also to touch them in deed. But if you are to heed us at all, listen to those who advise what is beneficial. Postpone your voyage to Italy until the fortune of this city advises what you ought to do. In the spring, we will know it, and you will too. And may it not be what we pray against. Thus, it will not be difficult for you to enjoy something worthy of your lineage and virtue from our imperial affairs, with us assisting you as best we can. But if you were to look more to our way of life, you would have us in place of all, promising you from here whatever you might need in due time, though you ought to hope even without promises. But in the undesirable, which may it not come, you must seek Italy and every place. But for now, let the island, which suffices for you, be preferred.

TO LADY SIMONIS PALAIOLOGINA

VII. To Lady Simonis Palaiologina.

To the most noble and God-filled lady Simonis Palaiologina Asanina, filled with every virtue.

1.Most noble and prudent lady, we have received the writing of your piety. We thank you, therefore, for your splendid disposition, and we rejoice in your Godly knowledge, humility, and purity of mind. We knew you to be such before and to have such a disposition toward us. But from the fruit of your soul, that is, from your letters, we have come to know even better the power of God's grace in you. For by the grace of the all-working God, understanding, humility, faith, and all such things grow in the souls of men, and we have nothing good that we have not received. Evil alone is from us, which is nothing but the absence of good. What, then, shall we answer you? We do not know, but we pray to the Lord that, as much as we are unable to repay and satisfy your pious devotion, the generous benefactor and common Father and Master of us all may fulfill it for you, His most reverent and precious child, since you render such devotion to Him, the common Father of all, through us. But we, the corruption of worms and vessels prepared for dishonor, having lived all our time in many sins and owing a great account for the gifts of God toward us, because we have darkened them with the wickedness of our will and hope only in His mercy, by which He justifies even the ungodly when He wills, by His inscrutable judgments, we know well and confess that we are unworthy to be called fathers, teachers, or anything honorable among men, and we greatly fear and tremble for this. For the rest, men can neither do what we wish, however powerful we are, nor wish what we can, however good we are. For our will and power are weak. Nor do we know what it is fitting for us to wish, since our knowledge is dark without the light of God. But God alone knows, wills, and can do all good and the good of each of us. May that all-good and all-perfect Provider strengthen your heart in love and fear of Him and purify it from all desire for the deceit of this age and firmly implant in you the desire for eternal life in the keeping of His will, so that He may again fulfill all your desires, for He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him, and they will lack no good. Align your will with God. Give Him all your will, not only in prayer and word but also in every effort of deed according to your ability, and then God will give you His will. Blessed are those upon whom the divine will comes, and those who know that the divine will comes upon them. They know when they are fully convinced that they earnestly seek it always and earnestly align their own will with it. These things we pray for you, and you pray these daily to God for yourself, and sometimes for us. Repentance.

2.I thank you for desiring to see us. I desire and pray for the salvation of all of you and relief in this life from all sorrows.

† The least, Gennadius.

HISTORICAL WORKS

Historical Works: Chronography (1472).*

† This Chronography has been compiled from ancient writings up to the fourth century, and from there it has been supplemented with Greek histories, up to the Divine Economy, which is our aim to chronograph, having gathered the times from Adam until that point.

1.Adam, the first man, at the age of 130 years, begot Seth, and he lived 800 years; in total, he lived 930 years. Seth, at the age of 105 years, begot Enos, and he lived 807 years; in total, he lived 912 years. Enos, at the age of 90 years, begot Cainan, and he lived 815 years; in total, he lived 905 years. Cainan, at the age of 70 years, begot Mahalaleel, and he lived 840 years; in total, he lived 910 years. Mahalaleel, at the age of 65 years, begot Jared, and he lived 830 years; in total, he lived 895 years. Jared, at the age of 162 years, begot Enoch, and he lived 800 years; in total, he lived 962 years. Enoch, at the age of 65 years, begot Methuselah, and he lived 300 years; in total, he lived 365 years, and he was translated. Methuselah, at the age of 187 years, begot Lamech, and he lived 782 years; in total, he lived 969 years. Lamech, at the age of 182 years, begot Noah, and he lived 595 years; in total, he lived 777 years. Noah, at the age of 500 years, begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth. In the 600th year of his life, the flood occurred, and he lived 350 years after the flood; in total, he lived 950 years. From Adam to the flood, there were 2,262 years according to the Septuagint, though Josephus records 2,256 years. However, the Septuagint is more accurate.

2.After the flood, in the second year, Shem begot Arphaxad, and he lived 500 years. Arphaxad, at the age of 35 years, begot Cainan, and Cainan, at the age of 35 years, begot Shelah. Shelah, at the age of 30 years, begot Eber, and Eber, at the age of 34 years, begot Peleg. Peleg, at the age of 30 years, begot Reu. In the days of Peleg, the tower of Babel was built, and the division of languages occurred. In Hebrew, "Peleg" means "division," and he died before his father Eber. Reu, at the age of 32 years, begot Serug, and Serug, at the age of 30 years, begot Nahor. Nahor, at the age of 29 years, begot Terah, and Terah, at the age of 70 years, begot Abraham. During the time of Terah, there arose from the tribe of Shem a giant named Cronus.
From the flood to the birth of Abraham, there were 1,072 years.

3.Abraham, at the age of 75 years, received the divine oracle, and at the age of 100 years, he begot Isaac. He lived a total of 175 years. During his time, Melchizedek also lived. Isaac, at the age of 60 years, begot Jacob, and he lived a total of 180 years. Jacob, at the age of 77 years, begot Levi, and he lived a total of 147 years. Levi, at the age of 46 years, begot Kohath. Kohath, at the age of 63 years, begot Amram. Amram, at the age of 70 years, begot Moses. From the first year of Abraham to the birth of Moses, there were 505 years.

4.Moses, at the age of 80 years, was entrusted by God with the leadership of Israel. He led them for 40 years and died on Mount Nebo, having lived a total of 120 years. From the birth of Abraham to the year in which Moses was entrusted with the leadership and delivered the Jews from the Egyptians, there were 505 years. The sojourn of the children of Israel, which they spent in Egypt and the land of Canaan, was 505 years, as Moses himself states. Joshua, the son of Nun, succeeded Moses and led Israel for 27 years, having lived a total of 110 years. The leadership of Israel lasted for 67 years in total, and after Joshua, no one else led them, but the Jews were under judges for many years.

The Judges of the Jews

5.After Joshua, the son of Nun, the elders, along with Judah, began to judge Israel. However, the Jews disobeyed and separated, mingling with the surrounding nations, and they were delivered into the hands of Cushan-Rishathaim, the king of Mesopotamia, for eight years. Othniel humbled him and judged Israel for 40 years. After Othniel, Eglon, the king of Moab, rose up and oppressed Israel for 18 years. Ehud killed him and judged Israel for 80 years. During the time of Ehud, the Athenians began to be ruled by kings, the first of whom was Cecrops, the double-formed and gigantic king. The ninth and last was Theseus, until the 29th year of Manasseh, after which they returned to democracy.

6.After Ehud, Jabin, the king of Canaan, ruled over the Jews for 20 years. At that time, Deborah, the prophetess, called Barak, and together they crushed Jabin and judged Israel for 40 years. Then Oreb and Zeb, the Midianites, oppressed Israel for seven years. Gideon killed them and judged Israel for 40 years. After him, Abimelech rose up but was quickly killed. Then Tola judged Israel for 23 years, followed by Jair for 22 years. When the Jews sinned again, they were delivered into the hands of the Ammonites for 18 years. Jephthah delivered them and judged Israel for six years. After him, Ibzan judged for seven years, Elon for ten years, and Abdon for eight years.

7.Then the Jews were enslaved by the Philistines for 40 years, and Samson delivered them, judging Israel for 20 years. After Samson, Eli, the priest, led the Jews. His sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were lawless. When Eli heard of the death of his sons and the capture of the Ark by the enemy, he fell from his seat, broke his neck, and died, having judged Israel for 40 years. After him, there was anarchy for 12 years, during which Samuel, as a priest and prophet, assisted Israel rather than judging them, being honored by them for his virtue. When Joel and Abijah, the sons of Samuel, turned away from justice, the people agreed to ask for a king. Saul was the first king, with Samuel as his helper. Thus, the times after the leadership of Moses until the end of the judges and the beginning of the kingship lasted 356 years.

The Kings of the Jews

8.The first king of all the Jews, including the twelve tribes, was Saul, who reigned for 40 years. After him, David reigned for 40 years, and Solomon, the son of David, also reigned for 40 years. Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, succeeded him, but due to his harshness, the tribes were divided. Ten tribes went to Samaria and were ruled there for 210 years and six months, until they were exiled by the king of Assyria, Shalmaneser, to Assyria. In their place, Shalmaneser brought Cutheans, Buthians, Sepharvites, and Anamites, all Chaldeans by race, who claimed to be Jews and descendants of Abraham.

9.Thus, the twelve tribes were ruled by three kings for 120 years. After the division, the two tribes remaining in Jerusalem were ruled successively until the captivity. After Solomon, Rehoboam ruled over the twelve tribes, and then over the two tribes in Jerusalem for 17 years. His son Abijah reigned for six years, followed by Asa for 41 years, and Jehoshaphat for 25 years. During Jehoshaphat's reign, Micaiah, Elijah, and Elisha prophesied. His son Jehoram reigned for eight years, followed by Ahaziah for one year. Ahaziah's son Joash reigned with his mother Athaliah for 40 years. His son Amaziah reigned for 29 years, followed by Uzziah for 52 years. During Uzziah's reign, Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Jonah, and Joel prophesied. His son Jotham reigned for 16 years, followed by Ahaz for 16 years, and Hezekiah for 29 years. Hezekiah's son Manasseh reigned for 55 years. During his reign, Byzantium was founded. His

son Amon reigned for two years, followed by Josiah for 31 years. During Josiah's reign, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zephaniah prophesied. His son Jehoahaz reigned for three months, followed by Jehoiakim for 11 years. Jehoiakim's son Jehoiachin reigned for three months and five days. Mattaniah, also called Zedekiah, the uncle of Jehoiachin, reigned for 11 years. Nebuchadnezzar blinded him, destroyed Jerusalem, and took him captive to Babylon. Thus, the total years of the kings who ruled Israel from Rehoboam were 390 years.

10.After the captivity of the Jews to Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar ruled the Medes for 43 years. His son Evil-Merodach reigned for 12 years, followed by his brother Belshazzar for four years. Darius the Mede killed Belshazzar and reigned for 17 years. Cyrus overthrew Darius and became the monarch of the Persians and Medes, ruling for 30 years. He released the Jews from captivity and commanded the rebuilding of the Temple in his second year, though it was not fully completed due to opposition.

The Kingdom of the Egyptians

11.After the death of Darius, Alexander the Great reigned for six years and died in Persia. He was buried in Alexandria, Egypt, by Ptolemy, who succeeded him and reigned for 40 years. After him, Ptolemy Philadelphus reigned for 38 years, followed by Ptolemy Euergetes for 25 years, Ptolemy Philopator for 17 years, Ptolemy Epiphanes for 24 years, Ptolemy Philometor for 35 years, Ptolemy Euergetes II for 29 years, Ptolemy Soter II for 17 years, Ptolemy Alexander for 10 years, and Ptolemy Dionysus for 29 years. Cleopatra, the daughter of Ptolemy Dionysus, reigned for 22 years. Augustus, the Roman emperor, defeated her and ended the Ptolemaic dynasty, bringing Egypt under Roman rule. Thus, from Alexander to the death of Cleopatra, there were 294 years.

12.In the 42nd year of Augustus' reign, Christ, the Son of God and our God, was born of the blessed Virgin. This was the 27th year after the fall of the Ptolemaic dynasty. From the reign of Alexander to the birth of Christ, there were 300 years, and from Adam, 5,500 years.

13.In the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar, when Christ was 33 years old, He underwent His Passion for the salvation of the world. This was the 5,530th year from Adam, on the 25th of March, a Friday, during the full moon. He rose on the 27th of the same month. The cycle of the sun was 23, and the moon was 19 at the time of the Passion. On the 24th, which was the Sabbath, the Jewish Passover was celebrated according to the Scriptures.

14.It is noteworthy that from the second year of Darius, when the city and the Temple were completed, until the death of Cleopatra, when Jerusalem, Judea, and Egypt came under Roman rule, 490 years of Daniel's prophecy were fulfilled. This marked the beginning of the divine economy for the universal salvation through the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the end of Jewish impiety, which culminated in their rejection of Christ and their final, devastating destruction as a just judgment for their sins.

Summary of Years:

1. From Adam to the flood: 2,262 years (according to the Septuagint).
2. From the flood to the birth of Abraham: 1,072 years.
3. From Abraham to the leadership of Moses: 505 years.
4. From the leadership of Moses to the beginning of the judges: 40 years.
5. From the beginning of the judges to their end: 356 years.
6. The twelve tribes were ruled by three kings for 120 years.
7. The two tribes in Jerusalem were ruled until the captivity: 390 years.
8. From the captivity to Cyrus: 70 years.
9. From Cyrus to Alexander: 210 years.
10. From Alexander to the birth of Christ: 300 years.
11. Total years from Adam: 5,500 years.

† Another Note from the Most Accurate Records: This note differs from the previous one in the details of the kingdoms and the years of their reigns, but it reaches the same conclusion, fixing the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh in the 5,506th year from the creation of the world.

1.Adam led the generations of men born from him for 930 years, and after him, his son Seth led for 912 years. Up to this point, that is, for 2,242 years, humanity was without kings. In the 2,243rd year, the Chaldeans raised up a king for themselves from Babylon, Alorus. After him, other kings reigned until the flood, ruling for 1,248 years. Thus, from Adam to the flood, there were 3,262 years according to the Septuagint. At that time, Noah was 600 years old.

2.After the flood, Noah led for 350 years, followed by Shem, and then Arphaxad. After them, seven Chaldean kings ruled for a total of 1,659 years. In the 1,659th year, the Arabs took power, beginning with their first king, Mardokempados, and ruled for 215 years. Then followed 175 years without a king, during which the Arabs were at war with the Assyrians and were weakened, though the Assyrians had not yet fully conquered them. Thus, from Adam to this point, there were 5,311 years. At this time, Abraham was in his 70th year.

3.The Assyrians then gained complete control and reigned, beginning with their first king, Belus, for 37 kings and a total of 1,306 years. After them, the Medes defeated the Assyrians and took the kingdom for themselves, beginning with Arsaces and ending with Astyages, with 14 kings ruling for 258 years. Then Cyrus became the monarch of the Persians and Medes, and his dynasty, including Darius the son of Arsaces, lasted for 137 years.

4.Alexander the Great overthrew Darius and ruled over the Egyptians and other nations in Asia. His dynasty lasted until Cleopatra, the eleventh ruler after Ptolemy I, who established the kingdom in Egypt after Alexander. This dynasty lasted for 294 years. Then Augustus brought Egypt and its kingdom under Roman rule. This was the 15th year of his reign over the Romans and the nations under them.

5.In the 29th year after the subjugation of Egypt, which was the 42nd year of Augustus' total reign, our Lord Jesus Christ was born in the flesh.

Thus, from Adam, there have been seven kingdoms:

1. The first was the Chaldean kingdom.
2. The second was the Arab kingdom.
3. The third was the Assyrian kingdom.
4. The fourth was the Median kingdom.
5. The fifth was the Persian kingdom.
6. The sixth was the Egyptian kingdom.
7. The seventh and final is the Roman kingdom.

Summary of Years:

1. Adam and Seth, without kings: 2,242 years.
2. The first Chaldean kings: 1,248 years.
3. After them, the Chaldeans ruled again: 1,659 years.
    a. Total from Adam to the flood: 3,262 years.
4. The Arabs ruled: 215 years.
5. Then followed years without a king: 175 years.
6. The Assyrians ruled: 1,306 years.
7. The Medes ruled: 258 years.
8. The Persians ruled until the death of Alexander: 137 years.
    a. Total from Adam to the death of Alexander: 5,311 years.
9. The Egyptian kingdom: 294 years, ending in the 15th year of Augustus' reign.
10. In the 27th year after the subjugation of Egypt, the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh occurred.
    a. Total from Adam to the birth of Christ: 5,506 years.

In the 5,530th year from Adam, which was the 15th year of Tiberius' reign, our Lord underwent His saving Passion on the 25th of March, a Friday. The solar cycle was 23, and the lunar cycle was 19. On the 24th, which was the Sabbath, the Jewish Passover was celebrated according to the Scriptures.

To Him be glory and worship forever. Amen.

Notes:

1.The Kingdom of the Christians, which was also the kingdom of the Romans, began with Emperor Constantine and his mother Helena. The end of this kingdom came with another Constantine and his mother Helena. Helena passed away shortly before the fall of the city, and her son Constantine was killed during the conquest. Thus, from the first Constantine and his mother Helena to these last rulers, no other Constantine and Helena reigned.

2.The first Patriarch of Constantinople, during the reign of Constantine, was Metrophanes. The last Patriarch was also named Metrophanes, who died in the city while it was still free. Gregory, however, departed to Rome, where he died. Between the first and last Metrophanes, no other Patriarch by that name served in Constantinople.

3.Constantinople began to be built by Constantine on the 11th of May and was completed on the 3rd of May. It was captured on the 29th of May. Thus, in the same month, it began, was completed, and ultimately fell.

4.The city, on the 29th of May, committed its greatest sins annually, and on the third day of each week, under the pretext of a festival, all manner of lawlessness occurred in its streets. When the final and most just discipline of the Lord came, these two days coincided.

5.There was an oracle that said, "When a ruler with the name Io reigns and a patriarch with the same name serves simultaneously, then, alas for the king of the Christians and the Church, for the end of both will come." The word Io is a lamenting adverb meaning "woe." Those who overthrew the Church in Italy were John, the king, and Joseph, the patriarch. With the overthrow of the Church, the fall of the kingdom followed.

6.The first to begin the overthrow of the Christian kingdom and Church, and the last to overthrow the very throne, bore the same name.

In the year 1472. †

1.In the Book of Genesis, by divine revelation, the blessed Moses declared that on the sixth day of creation, the first man, Adam, was formed, and on the seventh day, God rested from all His works. Similarly, the restoration of humanity fittingly occurred in the sixth millennium of days. For the second Adam, who is from heaven, as the divine Paul says, was born for the restoration of the human race in the 5,506th year, that is, in the fifth and a half millennium, which is counted as the sixth millennium, since the part represents the whole. Therefore, it is reasonable that at the end of the seventh millennium, there will be a rest from the works of God, that is, the cessation of created things and the end of their governance according to divine providence.

2.The completion of the sixth millennium has now occurred, and the end of the seventh and final kingdom has come. From this point forward, it is to be expected that the eighth, eternal age and the true, everlasting kingdom will soon begin, as foretold in the divine Scriptures, which speak clearly of these things. Those who know the Scriptures and devoutly pay attention to them await this with faith. According to the Septuagint, there are 70 years remaining from now, when the 5,699th year has just been completed, to fulfill the seventh millennium. According to Josephus, however, there are twice as many, that is, 41 years. What will

come to pass is known only to the Lord. But we, relying more on the chronology of the Septuagint and seeing the signs of the end already appearing, choose the shorter period of the two, that is, the 20 years.

1. From Adam to the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh: 5,500 years.
2. From the birth of Christ to the death of John, the king: 1,451 years.
3. In total: 6,951 years.
4. His brother Constantine reigned for four years, and in the fourth year of his reign, he was killed during the fall of the city. Thus, at the end of the Christian kingdom and the fall of the city, the year was 6,953 (1453).

———

[THE END]